

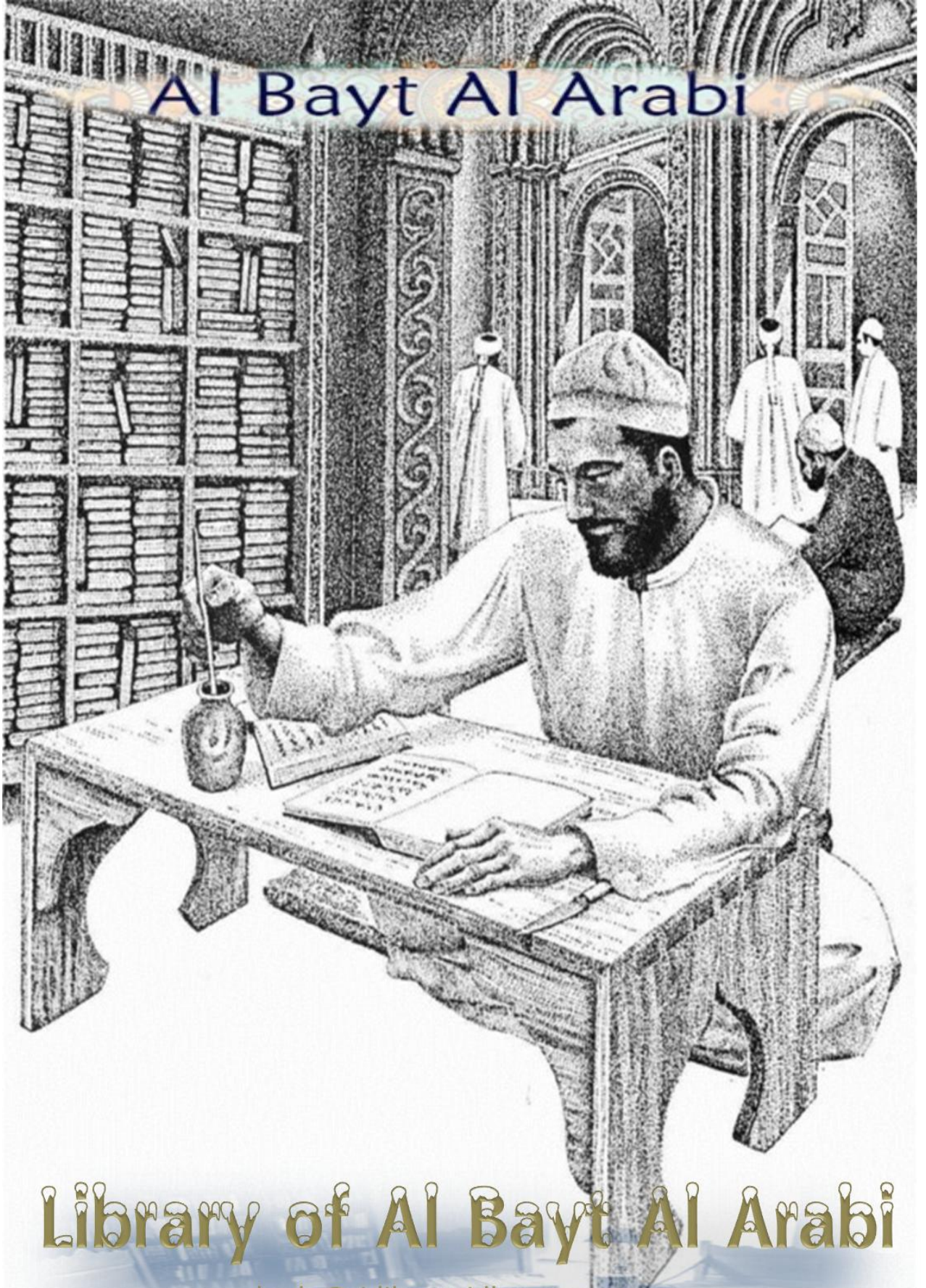
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Historical Dictionary of Syria

David Commins

Asian Historical Dictionaries, No. 22



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For Marcia Zakeeya

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Editor's Foreword

Syria is located in one of the most strategic areas of the Middle East, a situation from which successive countries and peoples of the region have both benefited and suffered. Recently, its locale has been a definite asset. Syria's role has been crucial in determining Lebanon's future and in influencing the outcome of the Gulf War and will be vital in unraveling the Arab-Israeli conflict and sustaining the peace process. This role is sometimes less evident than that of other Middle Eastern states because Syria's leader is quieter, indeed, more secretive than his peers. But his action is often more decisive given the strong and enduring hold on power of Hafiz al-Asad.

Under these conditions, this series would remain very incomplete without a solid *Historical Dictionary of Syria*, which I am now pleased to present. It provides us with substantial information on Syria's location and population, economy and politics, religion and culture. It covers the history not only of the present-day state but its predecessors over the centuries. This is done through numerous entries on significant persons, places, events, and institutions. This long history is also summed up in a brief chronology. And further information can be located through a broad and selective bibliography.

David Commins, who is presently professor of history at Dickinson College, spends much of his time teaching students and others about the Middle East, and especially Syria. He follows events there regularly and visits periodically. Among the fruits of this effort are various articles and a book, *Islamic Reform: Politics and Social Change in Late Ottoman Syria*. This has provided an excellent platform for writing what should become an essential primer on Syria.

JON WORONOFF
SERIES EDITOR

Acknowledgments

In composing this work I have been fortunate to enjoy assistance and support from a number of friends and colleagues. At Dickinson College's Spahr Library, Tina Maresco and Natalia Chromiak of the interlibrary loan department promptly handled my many requests for books and articles. In the history department, Gladys Cashman and Elaine Mellen assisted with the production of the camera-ready manuscript. To Lynn Ahwesh and Lou Thieblemont, I owe the pleasure of my first visit to Syria in several years. Spending a few days passing Turcomen villages, Crusader castles, bedouin tents, and medieval city walls reminded me of the presence of Syria's long history. I am especially grateful to my friend Dr. Ernest Hamilton for reading the text and suggesting changes. A general reference work depends on research carried out by dozens of Syrian and Western scholars over many decades. Reviewing some of their work has made me mindful of a weighty scholarly legacy. It is my hope that this historical dictionary entices the reader to explore Syrian history in greater depth.

I have striven for accuracy in composing each entry. Should the reader find mistakes, I would appreciate corrections so that I may revise the work in the event of a second edition being published. Please send corrections to commins@dickinson.edu, or c/o History Department, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA 17013.

Note on Spelling

Because this work is intended for a general audience, I have transliterated Arabic names and terms without the diacritics that specialists often prefer. There are two Arabic consonants, hamza and ayn, that cannot be represented by any letters in the English alphabet. They are commonly designated by ' for hamza and ' for ayn. I have transliterated these two letters only when they occur in the medial position. The definite article "al-" is included only when a name is first mentioned. To look up a cross-reference for al-Quwwatli, for example, look under "Q" and not under "A."

A note on using the dictionary: Cross-references are indicated by the use of bold type at the first mention of a name or term.

Acronyms

CUP Committee of Union and Progress

DMZ Demilitarized Zones

NRCC National Revolutionary Command Council

PLO Palestine Liberation Organization

SCP Syrian Communist Party

SSNP Syrian Social National Party

UAR United Arab Republic

UN United Nations

US United States

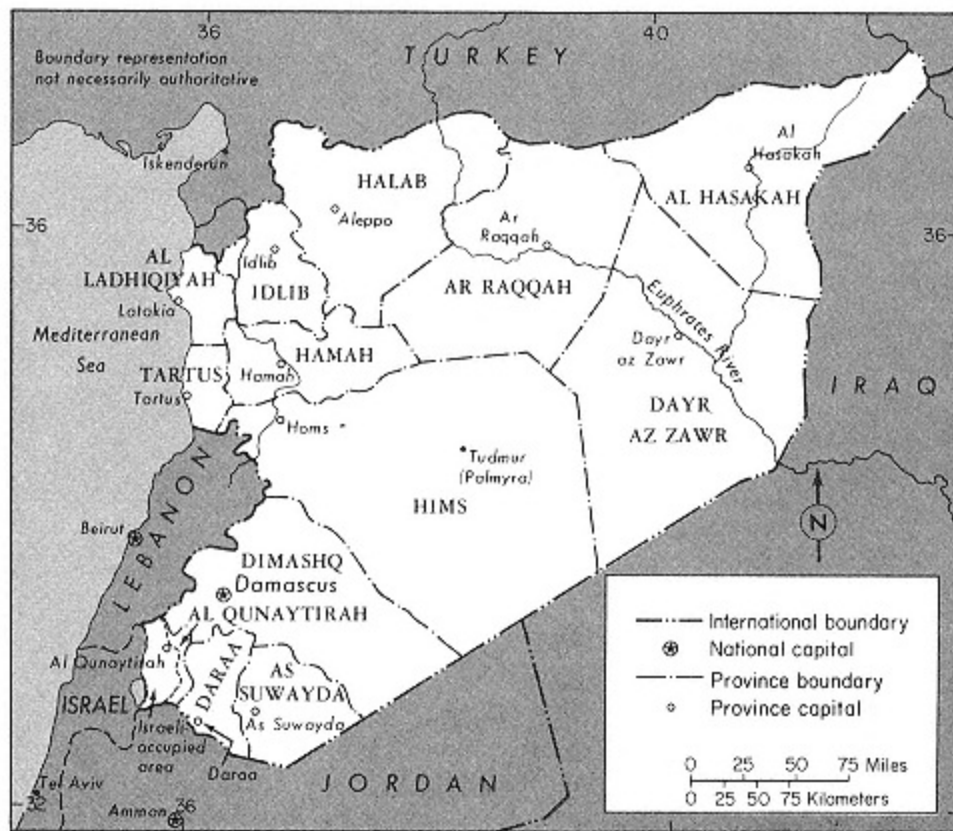


Figure 1.
Administrative Divisions of Syria.
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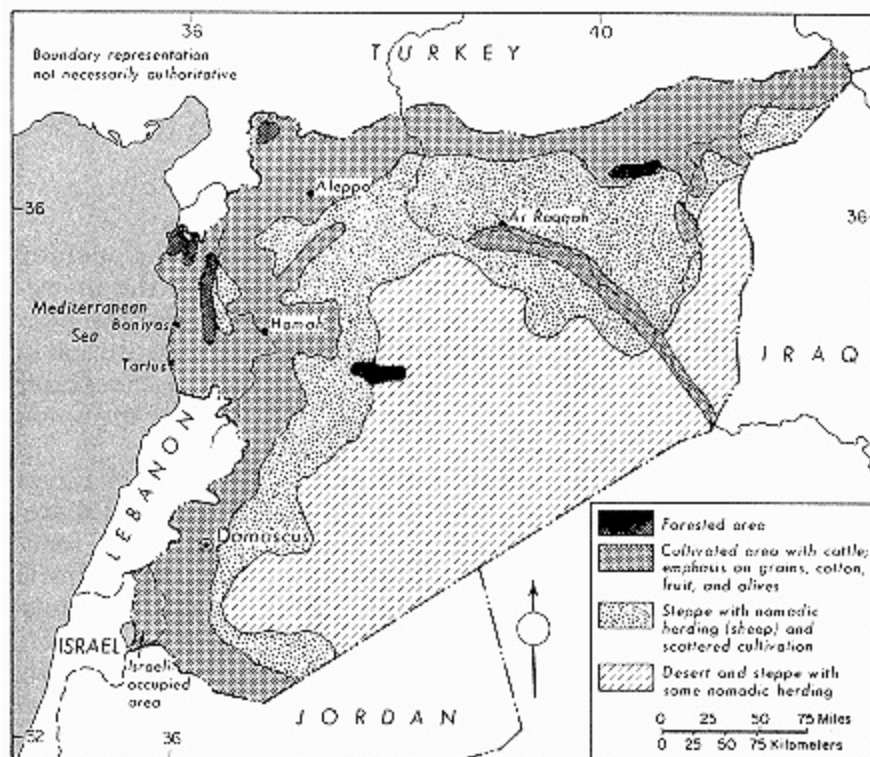


Figure 2.

Land Use.

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Chronology

B.C.

3500

Early settlement at Ebla

2450-2350

Ebla flourishes in northern Syria

2200-2000

Amorite migrations into northern Syria

2000-1800

Amorite domination in the north; emergence of Ugarit and Aleppo

1800-1650

Amorite kingdom of Yamkhad at Aleppo

1650-1350

Mitanni domination in the north; Egyptian domination in the south

1590

Hittite invasion of the north

1350-1200

Hittites supplant Mitanni rule; Carchemish emerges as major Hittite kingdom; Egyptians continue to dominate the south

1200-1000

Early Iron Age; Aramaean immigration; raids by Sea Peoples along the coast; Assyrian military expeditions

c. 1180

Destruction of Ugarit

1000-732

Aramaean kingdom of Aram with capital at Damascus; rise of Aramaean kingdom at Hama in central Syria

732-612

Assyrian rule

612-538

Babylonian and Neo-Babylonian rule

538-333

Persian Achaemenid rule

333-332

Alexander the Great conquers Syria

312-A.D. 106

Arab Nabataean dynasty in southern Syria

301-240

Era of Seleucid rule

240-198

Ptolemies of Egypt annex Syria

198-64

Era of Seleucid decline

64 B.C.-A.D. 334

Roman rule

A.D.

106-272

Semi-autonomous kingdom at Palmyra

334-634

Capital of Roman Empire moves to Byzantium; Syria ruled by Christian emperors

634-641

Arab Muslim conquests

632-661

Rightly guided caliphs

661-750

Umayyad caliphate

750-1258

Abbasid caliphate

868-905

Tulunid rule

905-935

Restoration of Abbasid rule

935-969

Ikhshidid rule

944-1016

Hamdanid dynasty (northern Syria)

978-1078
Fatimid dynasty (southern Syria)

1016-1023
Fatimids rule northern Syria

1023-1079
Mirdasid dynasty (northern Syria)

1079-1104
Saljuk rule in Damascus

1086-1113
Saljuk rule in Aleppo

1098-1303
Crusades

1104-1171
Atabegs in Damascus

1128-1171
Atabegs in Aleppo

1171-1260
Ayyubid dynasty

1260-1516
Mamluk sultanate

1516-1918
Ottoman dynasty

1725-1783
Azm governors

1775-1804
Ahmad al-Jazzar

1831-1840
Egyptian occupation

1839-1876

Tanzimat era

1850

Communal massacre in Aleppo

1860

Communal massacre in Damascus

1876-1909

Reign of Sultan Abdulhamid II

1876

December

Ottoman constitution promulgated

1878

February

Abdulhamid suspends the constitution

1908

July

Military mutiny to restore constitution

1908-1918

Constitutional Era

1914

Ottoman Empire enters World War I on side of Entente

1914/15

Husayn-McMahon Correspondence: Britain pledges to support an independent Arab kingdom in exchange for a revolt against Ottoman rule in Arabia

1916

May

Sykes-Picot Accord between France and Britain to partition Arab lands of the Ottoman Empire into spheres of influence

June

Arab Revolt against Ottoman rule

1918

October

Allies defeat Ottomans and end Ottoman rule in Syria; Amir Faysal forms an Arab government

1920-1946

French Mandate

1920

April

San Remo Agreement assigns France the League of Nations mandate for Syria

July

French army occupies Aleppo; battle of Maysalun; French occupation of Damascus

September

France creates Greater Lebanon by detaching portions of Syrian territory and incorporating them into Lebanon; divides Syria into

separate states centered on Damascus and Aleppo; establishes separate regime for the Alawis

1922

France establishes separate regime for Jabal Druze

1925

France combines Damascus, Aleppo, Homs, and Hama into a single administrative unit

1925-1927

The Great Revolt

1928

April-June

Elections to constituent assembly; National Bloc minority dominates proceedings

July

Constituent Assembly publishes draft constitution

August

France rejects draft constitution, adjourns the assembly

1929

February

France prorogues constituent assembly

1930

May

France approves modified version of constituent assembly's constitution as basis for national elections to parliament

1931-1932

December/January

National elections to parliament; National Bloc wins 17 of 69 seats

1933

November

France temporarily suspends parliament for rejecting France's proposal for a treaty

1936

January-March

General strike throughout Syria in response to French crackdown on the National Bloc; strike ends in victory for the Bloc when the French invite its leaders to Paris to negotiate a treaty

April-September

Negotiations on Franco-Syrian Treaty to provide mechanisms for Syria's eventual independence and admittance to the League of Nations

November

National elections to parliament, huge victory for National Bloc

December

Parliament elects Hashim al-Atasi president of the republic; Jamil Mardam appointed prime minister; parliament ratifies treaty with France; Jabal Druze and Territory of the Alawis are incorporated into Syria

1937

November

League of Nations places Alexandretta Province under a special autonomous regime with tenuous formal links to Syria

1938

July

Franco-Turkish Friendship Treaty guarantees Turkey's neutrality in the event of aggression against France; Turkey allowed to introduce troops to Alexandretta

December

French parliament refuses to act on the Franco-Syrian Treaty, effectively killing it

1939

February

Mardam government resigns

June

Turkey formally annexes Alexandretta

July
High Commissioner suspends constitution, dissolves parliament, restores separate administrations for Jabal Druze, Latakia, and Jazira

1939-1945
World War II

1940
December
Vichy administration established in Syria

1941
June-July
Allied invasion of Syria and Lebanon to remove Vichy administration; Britain becomes dominant military power in Syria

October
Free French restore constitutional government

1942
February
France reunites Jabal Druze and Latakia to the rest of Syria

1943
July
National elections result in huge victory for National Party; Shukri al-Quwwatli becomes president

1945
May
Anti-French demonstrations by crowds seeking Syrian independence

May 29-30
French bombardment of Damascus kills 400 Syrians; British forces wrest control from the French

1946
April 17
France withdraws troops from Syria

1946-1958

1947
Founding of Ba'th Party by Michel Aflaq and Salah al-Din al-Bitar

1948
War with Israel

1949
March 30
Military coup by Husni al-Za'im

July 20
Armistice with Israel

August 14
Military coup by Sami al-Hinnawi

November 15-16
Election of constituent assembly

December 19
Military coup by Adib al-Shishakli

1950
February
Akram al-Hawrani forms Arab Socialist Party

September
New constitution promulgated

1951
November
Shishakli dismisses civilian government

1952
April
Shishakli bans all political parties

1953
July
Shishakli elected president in plebiscite

1954

February

Shishakli overthrown; civilian democratic regime and 1950 constitution restored

September

National elections increase strength of neutralist and leftist trends

1955

February

Formation of the Baghdad Pact, a prowestern military alliance between Iraq and Turkey; political pressures on Syria to join the alliance

April

Assassination of Col. Adnan al-Malki, leader of neutralist faction in officer corps, triggers bolsters popular anti-western sentiment

October

Security pact with Egypt and Saudi Arabia formed to keep Syria out of Baghdad Pact

1956

February

Arms deal with Czechoslovakia

1957

August-October

Crisis in relations with US, Turkish troops mass near border

1958

February

Formation of United Arab Republic between Syria and Egypt

1959

December

Resignation of Ba'thist ministers from UAR government

1961

July

Socialist decrees nationalize banks and other large firms

September 22

Syria withdraws from UAR

1962

March 28-April 2

Abortive military coups against conservative civilian government

1963

March 8

Military coup by Ba'thist and Nasirist officers

July 18

Nasirist uprising suppressed; Ba'thist officers take over power

1964

April

Anti-government demonstrations in Hama forcibly repressed; provisional constitution promulgated

1965

January

Nationalization of industry and foreign trade

May

Struggle for power within the Ba'th party leads to Aflaq's resignation as secretarygeneral

1966

February 23

Power struggle within Ba'th party issues in coup by radical "neo-Ba'thist" faction

1967

June 5-10

War between Israel and Syria, Egypt, and Jordan; Israeli forces seize Golan Heights; relations with United States severed

November

United Nations passes Resolution 242 calling for negotiations to end the Arab-Israeli conflict and the return of Arab territory seized in June

1968-1969

Development of power struggle between Salah al-Jadid and Hafiz al-Asad

1970

November 12

Hafiz al-Asad comes to power in the corrective movement, a coup d'etat against the Ba'th Party's radical wing

1971

February

Hafiz al-Asad becomes president of Syria

1973

March 12

Promulgation of new permanent constitution

October

Syria and Egypt launch war against Israel

1974

May

Syrian-Israeli disengagement agreement

June

US-Syrian diplomatic relations re-established

1975

April

Civil war in Lebanon

1976

June

Syria intervenes in Lebanese Civil War against leftist Lebanese and Palestinian militias

October

Cease-fire in Lebanese civil war

1979

June

Muslim Brothers carry out massacre of military cadets in Aleppo

1980

Islamist and secular opponents launch campaign of protests, demonstrations, assassinations against the Asad regime; government responds with draconian measures

1981

December

Israel annexes the Golan Heights

1982

February

Uprising by Islamist forces in Hama quelled by the Syrian army

June-August

Israel invades Lebanon, skirmishes with Syrian troops, forces Palestine Liberation Organization to leave Lebanon, and engineers election of Bashir Gemayel as president of Lebanon

September

Bashir Gemayel assassinated and succeeded by his brother Amin Gemayel; United States, France, and Italy dispatch multinational force to stabilize Beirut area after Christian militia massacres Palestinian civilians

1983

May

Lebanese and Israeli negotiators agree on a security accord; Syria announces its opposition to the agreement and rallies Lebanese parties and militias to undermine it

November 13

President Asad falls ill and disappears from public view

November 27

Asad makes first public appearance in two weeks

December

Escalating confrontation between Syria and US and Israel over Lebanon culminates with Syrian anti-aircraft fire downing an American warplane and the capture of its pilot; Syria supports dissident Palestinian factions attacking groups loyal to PLO chairman Yasir Arafat; in December the Syrian-backed factions expel Arafat and 4,000 of his followers from the northern Lebanese city of Tripoli

1984

February

US withdraws its forces from Lebanon

February 29

Lebanese President Gemayel formally renounces the May 17 agreement with Israel

March

Power struggle between Rif'at al-Asad and rival officers threatens to destabilize the regime

May

Rif'at al-Asad leaves Syria on "diplomatic" trip that turns into a six-month exile to western Europe

November

Rif'at returns to Syria but much of his power base is dismantled

1985

January

Asad issues presidential amnesty for certain members of the Muslim Brothers, invites several exiles to return to Syria

June

Israel withdraws its forces to a strip of Lebanese territory along the border that it declares a security zone

December

Rif'at al-Asad again leaves the country for an extended stay abroad

1986

April 17

Attempt to plant a bomb on an El Al airliner at London is foiled; investigation leads British government to accuse the Syrian government of plotting terrorism in the Hindawi affair

October 10

Great Britain severs ties with Syria over the Hindawi affair

October 24

United States and Canada recall ambassadors in solidarity with Great Britain

November

West Germany downgrades relations with Syria over its claim that Syrian officials had

a hand in the March 29 bombing of a German-American Friendship Club in West Berlin

1987

February 22

After a request from the Lebanese prime minister, 7,000 Syrian troops enter West Beirut to end several months of incessant strife among rival militias

April

West Germany and Syria resume normal ties

June

Syrian government reportedly closes offices of Abu Nidal organization allegedly responsible for recent terrorist attacks in Europe; this action paves the way for better relations with Europe and the United States

July

European Community ends political sanctions

1988

August

War between Iran and Iraq ends in a qualified victory for Saddam Husayn's regime; the outcome is a defeat for Asad's pro-Iranian foreign policy and weakens his position in Arab politics

September

Amin Gemayel's presidential term expires without election of a successor; he appoints General Michel Aoun head of a caretaker government; Lebanese cabinet rejects Aoun's appointment; anti-Syrian groups rally behind Aoun; Iraq is the only Arab government to recognize the Aoun regime

1989

March

Aoun declares mission to evict Syrians, his forces fire on Syrian positions, clash with pro-Syrian militias, bombard West Beirut

June

Arab League invites the rulers of Algeria, Morocco, and Saudi Arabia to form a threeman committee to work on a solution to the Lebanese crisis

June-August

Artillery battles continue between Aoun and the Syrians in the Beirut area and the Bekaa valley

August 13

Aoun and Syrians agree to a UN Security Council appeal for a cease-fire

October 12

Lebanese parliament convened at Ta'if in Saudi Arabia agrees on a new National Pact that also calls for a Syrian withdrawal from the Beirut area to the Bekaa valley within two years of implementing the reforms

October 22

Michel Aoun denounces the Ta'if Accord

December 27

Syria and Egypt restore relations that were cut when Egypt signed a peace treaty with Israel in 1979

1990

February-March

Aoun weakened in fighting against Christian militia in East Beirut and its environs

August 2

Iraq invades Kuwait; Syria condemns the action

August 20

Syria sends 1,200 troops to Saudi Arabia

October 13

Syrian warplanes bomb Michel Aoun at the presidential palace outside Beirut; Aoun flees to the French embassy and clears the way for implementation of the Ta'if Accord; Syria's paramount status in Lebanon is assured

1991

January-March

Desert Storm evicts Iraqi army from Kuwait; 15,000 Syrian troops are part of the coalition but do not participate in combat

May 22

Syria and Lebanon sign Treaty of Brotherhood, Cooperation, and Coordination to regulate relations in political, economic, and security matters

July 18

United States Secretary of State James Baker visits Damascus and secures Asad's agreement to attend an international peace conference to begin talks aimed at resolving the Arab-Israeli conflict

October 30-November 4

Syria attends the international peace conference at Madrid and agrees to join bilateral talks with Israel but refuses to attend multilateral talks on water, arms control, and economic issues

December 10

Syria and Israel begin bilateral negotiations in Washington, D.C.

1992

June-July

Many Lebanese call for a Syrian withdrawal to the Bekaa valley before holding national parliamentary elections

August 23-September 6

Lebanese government proceeds with elections in the face of widespread Maronite boycott and a three-day general strike in East Beirut

September 23

Two years pass since the ratification of the Ta'if Accord, but Syria stalls on withdrawing to the Bekaa valley, which was supposed to take place according to the Ta'if Accord

December

Israel expels 400 Palestinians suspected of supporting the Islamic movement Hamas after the murder of an Israeli soldier; Arabs suspend peace talks with Israel in protest

1993

April

Arab-Israeli peace talks resume in Washington without a resolution of the status of 400 Palestinians expelled the previous December

August

Oslo Accord between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization breaks the wall of Arab solidarity in negotiations with Israel and weakens Syria's position

1994

January 16

American President Bill Clinton meets with Hafiz al-Asad in Damascus; Asad announces his goal is to achieve normal peaceful relations with Israel; large gaps remain, however, in the two parties' negotiating positions

January 21

President Asad's thirty-two-year-old son, Basil, dies in an automobile accident. The air force major had taken over responsibility for presidential security and recently emerged as a possible successor to his father

April

Syria and Russia sign first military and technical agreement since the demise of the Soviet Union

August

Elections to the People's Assembly result in a Ba'thist majority, but also in a large number of wealthy independents winning seats in a sign of the growing influence of Syrian capitalists benefiting from recent measures to liberalize the economy

October 26

Jordan and Israel sign a peace treaty; this increases Syria's diplomatic isolation in its talks with Israel

1995

As of September there is no visible progress in negotiations with Israel in spite of frequent trips to Damascus and Tel Aviv by American Secretary of State Warren Christopher and his aides

Introduction

The modern nation of Syria lies between Turkey in the north, Iraq in the east, Jordan in the south, Israel in the southwest, and Lebanon in the west. Before the twentieth century, Syria was rarely an independent country; rather, larger empires often ruled the country. The term Syria, or its Arabic equivalent, *bilad al-sham*, referred to a broad region encompassing the modern nations of Jordan, Israel, Lebanon, Syria, and the Turkish province of Hatay. Writers refer to Syria in the broader sense as geographical, historical, or greater Syria. Unless otherwise noted, this work restricts itself to Syria in its contemporary dimensions.

Current archaeological research shows that Syria's history stretches back 4,500 years during which the country has witnessed the rise and fall of many kingdoms, empires, and dynasties as well as numerous invasions. Nonetheless, certain patterns are evident that distinguish Syria from other parts of the Middle East. Its location at the crossroads of western Asia, northern Africa, Arabia, and the eastern Mediterranean and its lack of protective topography have made the country vulnerable to invasion and open to more peaceful migration. Movements of different peoples over the centuries have resulted in the formation of a diverse population. This diversity has been further accentuated by the presence of several physically isolated regions, the lack of a unifying river system, such as the Nile in Egypt or the TigrisEuphrates in Iraq, and barriers to travel: mountains, desert, and great distances between towns. Such internal diversity has contributed to a history marked by swings between periods of political unification and fragmentation. In addition, Syria has been the object of domination by more powerful neighbors in Egypt, Iraq, and Asia Minor (present-day Turkey) from ancient times to the present. Consequently, periods of Syrian unity and independence have been the historical exception rather than the rule. Since the Arab conquest in the seventh century, there have been only three unified, independent polities: the Umayyad dynasty from 661 to 750; the regime of the Nur al-Din Mahmud in the twelfth century; and in modern times since 1946.

Otherwise, Syria was politically fragmented or ruled from Baghdad (c. 750-908), Cairo (1171-1516), Istanbul (1516-1918), and Paris (1920-1946).

In contrast to this history of external domination and internal fragmentation, Syria has a long record of economic integration and cultural coherence rooted in its ancient cities. The major cities, Aleppo, Hama, Homs, and Damascus, have perennially serviced long distance trade along two distinct axes: a north-south axis from the Indian Ocean, Yemen, and Arabia to Asia Minor and the Mediterranean; and an east-west axis from Iran and Iraq to Egypt and the Mediterranean. Urban merchants organized, financed, and conducted long distance trade and used the wealth it generated to develop a thriving urban culture. In addition to the cities' role in trade, they served as the centers of political power over the surrounding countryside. The rulers resided in the main towns and extracted the agricultural surplus from the numerically dominant yet politically subordinate peasantry of surrounding villages. This surplus fed the inhabitants of Syria's main cities and supplied raw materials for artisanal manufactures, particularly textiles and leather goods. It also provided the chief source of rulers' wealth, which they lavished on monumental construction, more modest but necessary urban infrastructure (aqueducts, roads, defenses), and conspicuous consumption, which stimulated manufacturing. The cultural coherence, if not unity, of the Syrian polity and economy is evident in the mobility of rulers, soldiers, traders, artisans, laborers and peasants, who would find similar conditions wherever they went.

In addition to townsmen and villagers, the nomadic bedouin of the desert formed yet another component of Syria's population. While the various tribes preserved their distinctive way of life, dependence on livestock, seasonal migration, and independence of outside political authority, they also formed a part of Syrian society and culture since at least early Islamic times. In the first century of Muslim rule bedouin tribesmen formed the shock troops of conquest and consolidation of Arab authority. Throughout history they supplied animal products (hides, dairy products, meat) to townsmen and villagers, and transported merchandise in long distance caravans. In the domain of culture, the bedouin embodied the ideals of honor, bravery, and independence, the notion of an Arab way of life inherited from the pre-Islamic past that was diluted in the Muslim empires' effete cities. Moreover, bedouin were considered the bearers and preservers of

"pure" Arabic language, uncontaminated by contact with non-Arabic speakers, and for centuries their classical poetry stood as the model by which later creative efforts would be compared. In contrast to this romanticized concept of the bedouin, settled folk held them in contempt for the threat they posed to village and town, for another pattern in Syrian history is the fluctuation of the boundary between the desert and the sown, a flux that has occurred under both natural and political pressures. When central authority was weak or a series of droughts made marginal lands unproductive, the bedouin would advance with their herds to graze at the walls of the towns, forcing peasants to abandon villages. But at times of strong dynasties or abundant rains, the boundary would creep eastward and the bedouin would retreat. One may gain a clearer picture of the scenes on which Syria's history has been played out from a description of the land.

Physical Features

Syria's land area measures 185,170 square km (71,500 square miles), roughly the size of North Dakota. The country can be divided into five major geographical zones that run from north to south. First is a narrow strip along the Mediterranean. The coastal plain varies in width from nearly 30 km to a few hundred meters. This area's climate consists of mild winters with fairly abundant rainfall and hot humid summers. The greatest amount of precipitation falls in the north and decreases farther south. The second major zone consists of three mountain ranges that abruptly rise above the coastal plain. In the north the Amanus mountains have peaks over 1,600 meters. The Baylan Pass through the Amanus range is the main route between Aleppo and its historical port Antioch. South of that pass is the Aqra range, which stretches from Antioch through Latakia province to Tripoli in Lebanon. Within this range is the Jabal al-Ansariyya, a mostly Alawi and Christian region. The Aqra range ends at the Homs Gap, the major land route between Homs and Tripoli. The southernmost range is the Anti-Lebanon mountains, which run through Syria and Lebanon and have peaks as high as 3,600 meters. These mountain ranges are marked by their own particular climate. They have cold winters with frequent snowfall and the heaviest rainfall in the country. During the summer, days are hot and the nights cool. The third major zone is a broad interior plain on the eastern side of the mountains. It stretches

from Aleppo in the north to the Hawran in the south and is the site of the country's major towns and cities: Aleppo, Hama, Homs, and Damascus. Some regions receive a fair amount of rainfall, which decreases as one moves farther inland. Winters are mild and summers are hot and dry. The last main region is the Syrian Desert, which is really an extension of the huge Arabian desert and occupies the largest portion of the country in the east and south. The desert receives little rain and has cold winters and very hot, dry summers. In the north, the desert is bisected by the Euphrates River, the waters of which have been used to irrigate fields since ancient times. Moreover, as one approaches the Turkish border, there is higher and more regular rainfall and the desert merges with a semiarid steppe in the region known as Jazira.

Syria's main river is the Euphrates, which flows southwest from Turkey through Syria into Iraq. Two important tributaries of the Euphrates are the Khabur and Balikh Rivers. The Orontes River courses in a northerly direction through central Syria beneath the eastern slopes of Jabal Ansariyya. The Barada River, although relatively small, has been of great importance in Syria's history because it provides water to one of the country's two major cities, Damascus. The other major city, Aleppo, lies near the Quwayk River.

Ancient History

The earliest Syrian civilization flourished in the vicinity of Aleppo at the ancient city of Ebla, in Arabic, Tell Mardikh. Archaeologists discovered this ancient city in 1974 and have uncovered 15,000 tablets from the Ebla archives that date to around 2400 B.C. The tablets, inscribed in Sumerian cuneiform, mostly pertain to economic and administrative matters and attest to a flourishing trade with Egypt and Mesopotamia as well as textile and agricultural production. The tablets' language, Eblaite, is the oldest Semitic language of western Syria.

Another early center of civilization was founded in the third millennium by a Mesopotamian people, the Akkadians, at Mari, located on the middle Euphrates River. Mari thus initially represented an extension of Mesopotamian civilization, but around 2100 B.C. the Amorites took it over. These people were nomads of the Syrian desert who gradually shifted to settled life and established a number of city-

states between 2100 and 1800 B.C. In 1933 archaeologists discovered the Mari archives, which contain 20,000 clay tablets inscribed in Akkadian cuneiform dating from an eighteenth-century kingdom. During the first centuries of the second millennium, other Amorite kingdoms flourished in northern Syria, the most eminent one being the Yamkhad kingdom that ruled from Aleppo between 1800 and 1650. That period coincides with the greatest activity at Ugarit, in Arabic, Ras Shamra, a commercial center on the northern Syrian coast. Its good harbor and proximity to Crete and Cyprus made it an entrepot for trade between the Mediterranean and Mesopotamia. There followed more than four centuries of domination by outside powers that established tributary relations with several regional polities. Pharaonic Egypt dominated the southern half of Syria from 1650 until 1200. The northern parts came under the hegemony of the Mitanni kingdom, a northern Mesopotamian power, and then from 1350 the Anatolian Hittite kingdom held sway.

Between 1200 and 1000, Syrian history is more obscure because of the change in writing materials from durable tablets to perishable papyrus and skins. At the beginning of the period, Ugarit was destroyed, either by raiding Sea Peoples or by earthquake. The key development in these dark ages was the gradual migration of the Aramaeans from the south. Beginning around 1000, their city-states dominated Syria for nearly three centuries. The most important Aramaean centers were at Damascus, Hama, and Aleppo, where they built the renowned citadel that still rises above the town. In Damascus the Aramaeans constructed a temple for their deity Baal-Haddad on a site that would later become the church of John the Baptist and for the last 1,300 years the Umayyad mosque. The greatest contribution of the Aramaeans to the ancient world was their language, Aramaic, which became a cosmopolitan language for trade throughout the ancient Middle East and Mediterranean. The Aramaeans also spread the Phoenician alphabet of thirty letters, which other peoples borrowed and adapted to write Hebrew, Arabic, Persian, and Sanskrit. The Syriac dialect of Aramaic spoken at the northern town of Edessa became the liturgical language of Christians, and the term Syrian first referred to speakers of the Syriac language. To this day the Syrian Orthodox Christian church uses Syriac in its liturgy, and an Aramaic dialect is still spoken in a few Syrian towns.

In 732 the Assyrians conquered the Aramaean city-states and ruled Syria until 612, when Babylonian and then Neo-Babylonian invaders

established their rule. In 538 Cyrus the Great, founder of the Persian Achaemenid dynasty, absorbed Syria into the first empire to rule the entire Middle East from Egypt to the eastern borders of Iran. Persian rule lasted until Alexander the Great's conquest in 333-332. After Alexander's death in 323, his general Antigonus ruled Syria from Asia Minor, but in 301, his rivals, the Seleucids, took over the province. Seleucus established towns named for his father Antiochus (Antioch), his mother Laodicea (Latakia), and his wife Apamia. The Seleucids made Damascus their western capital and presided over an era of commercial expansion and Greek colonization, which gave rise to Hellenistic culture, a mixture of Greek, North African, and western Asian cultures. Greek urban colonies had baths, theaters, as well as other Hellenic institutions; yet Aramaic language and culture persisted among most Syrians throughout this period. In 312 the Seleucids established an outpost on the Euphrates River called Dura Europos. The town was later ruled by the Persians, then the Romans, and finally destroyed by the Persians in A.D. 256; discovered in 1920, Dura Europos is now famous for its Jewish synagogue and Christian chapel. During the Seleucid era, the Nabataeans created the first major Arab polity around 312 B.C., based on the towns of Bosra in southern Syria, and Petra in present-day Jordan.

Seleucid power rapidly declined until the Ptolemies of Egypt seized Syria. Between 240 and 198, Syria was a province of Egypt. The Romans conquered Syria in 64 B.C., and they converted temple of Baal in Damascus into a temple for Jupiter. In the Roman period, another independent Arab kingdom of the desert appeared at Palmyra, which gained importance after the fall of the Nabataeans in A.D. 106. Known as the "Bride of the Desert" and located 230 km northeast of Damascus, Palmyra prospered as the center of trade between Mesopotamia and the Mediterranean. Although the Romans declared it part of their Syrian province in 64 B.C., Palmyrenes maintained a semiautonomous status and developed one of the region's wealthiest cities. Palmyra's most famous ruler, Queen Zenobia, launched a revolt against Roman rule from 268 to 272, when her armies occupied Egypt and Asia Minor. A Roman counterattack put down the Palmyrene queen and ended up destroying much of the city.

The next major political development was the fourth-century establishment of Byzantium as the successor to Rome. For three hundred years the Christian Byzantines ruled Syria from Constantinople. They destroyed Jupiter's temple and made it a church

for John the Baptist. In the sixth century, the Byzantines supported an Arab vassal state under the Ghassanids, Arab Christians living on the southern fringes of Syria.

Islamic Period

The first Muslim ventures into Syria were minor raids during the Prophet Muhammad's lifetime and under the first caliph, Abu Bakr. An organized invasion (634-641) to conquer Syria took place under the second caliph, Umar, with the main battles between Byzantine and Arab forces taking place between 634 and 637. On the heels of military triumphs came large-scale immigration from Arabia and consolidation of control over Syria. For the next quarter century, the nascent Arab empire based in the western Arabian town of Medina ruled Syria, Egypt and Iraq, then the Umayyad dynasty established itself in Damascus and ruled the Arab empire for ninety years, the only time that Syria was the center of empire. In 750, the Abbasid dynasty supplanted the Umayyads and transferred the imperial center to Iraq. Syria remained under firm Abbasid control for about a century until provincial governors in Egypt asserted control over the country and their autonomy from Baghdad intermittently between 868 and 971.

During the later tenth and eleventh centuries Syria underwent one of its periods of fragmentation as the Fatimid dynasty in Egypt, the Saljuk sultans, who attained ascendancy over the Abbasids in Baghdad, the Hamdanids in Aleppo, and a resurgent Byzantine Empire contended for control over Syria. In the closing years of the eleventh century, Saljuk princes and vassals were ruling several petty states and feuding with one another when the Crusaders invaded, determined to regain the Holy Land for Christendom. In the early twelfth century, the Crusaders set up four Latin kingdoms, while in the Muslim arena power passed from Saljuk princes to their regents called atabegs. For fifty years, the atabegs warred with one another as often as with the Franks until Nur al-Din Mahmud consolidated power over most of Muslim Syria in 1154. His vassal, Saladin, later established the Ayyubid dynasty, which ruled Egypt and Syria from Cairo. This Muslim hero of Kurdish background stabilized the Muslim-Christian balance of power, but the political foundations he laid down dissolved seventy years after his death, and in 1260 the Ayyubids gave way to the Mamluk sultanate, a unique polity based on the creation of

households of slave soldiers loyal to the sultan, who himself had to rise from the ranks of former slaves. In a sense, the Mamluks came on the scene in the nick of time, as Syria faced a threat far more potent and destructive than the Crusaders ever posed. Two years earlier, Mongol invaders from Central Asia had sacked Baghdad and exterminated the Abbasid caliphate; in 1260, a Mongol army invaded Syria, swept away the Ayyubid principalities, and marched into Palestine. That same year, however, a Mamluk force ventured from Egypt to confront the Mongols and dealt them their first military defeat. In repulsing the Mongols, the Mamluks spared Syria the destructive consequences of Mongol rule that would plague Iraq and Iran for centuries. The Mamluks also uprooted the last stronghold of the Crusaders in 1303. Two centuries later, in 1516, the Mamluks fell to a different northern invader, the Ottoman dynasty, which had also vanquished the last vestiges of Byzantine power in 1453, when it seized Constantinople (Istanbul). For the next four hundred years, Syria was part of a vast empire that ruled over much of southeastern Europe, the central Arab lands down to the Indian Ocean, Egypt, and North Africa to the frontier of Morocco.

In the context of Syrian history the Ottoman era is conspicuous for bringing security from invasion and a long period of uninterrupted dynastic rule. Under these conditions Syria enjoyed a long period of stability and prosperity reflected in population growth, urban florescence, and expansion of the margins of cultivation. The Ottomans initially divided Syria into three provinces, each with a governor and garrison of janissaries to represent central authority. The northern one had its center at Aleppo; the southern one at Damascus; and a coastal one at Sidon. The Ottomans further divided these provinces into districts. Syria's distance from Istanbul and the strength of local forces compelled the Ottomans to rule in cooperation with urban notables and rural magnates. In the eighteenth century the balance of power shifted in favor of local forces, and the Ottomans appointed Syrian Arabs as governors of the province of Damascus. Ottoman vulnerability increased in the early nineteenth century, and the ambitious governor of Egypt, Muhammad Ali, exploited the situation when he had his army invade at the end of 1831. Egyptian rule lasted until the European powers forcibly imposed an Ottoman restoration in 1840. There followed a lengthy period of administrative and legal reform punctuated by outbreaks of communal violence in Aleppo (1850) and Damascus (1860). By 1900, however, Syria was more firmly tied

to Istanbul because of more rapid transport and communications as well as more effective administration.

Modern Era

In November 1914 the Ottoman Empire entered World War I on the side of the Entente, and Syria became exposed to a possible British invasion from Egypt. Moreover, British diplomacy struck an alliance with the sharif of Mecca, Husayn, and incited him to launch an Arab revolt against Ottoman rule in exchange for a promise to support the establishment of an independent Arab kingdom. The war concluded with the complete withdrawal of Ottoman forces from Syria. Husayn's son Faysal asserted Syrian independence in the name of a recently developed political ideology, Arab nationalism, but the fragile state was snuffed out by a French invasion in July 1920. There followed a quarter century of French rule under a mandate from the League of Nations and a struggle for Syrian unity and independence.

The unity of greater Syria was shattered in 1920 when Great Britain assumed a separate mandate over Palestine and Transjordan (southern Syria), and France detached portions of Syria and annexed them to Lebanon. The French then further divided Syria by creating separate administrations for the southern Druze and the northwestern Alawi regions. A great uprising broke out in 1925, sparked by a Druze revolt, and the French took nearly two years to suppress it. There followed a decade of political struggle between France and Syrian nationalists, who formed the National Bloc to pursue their aims. The first issue was the drafting of a constitution. France rejected a draft proposed by an elected constituent assembly dominated by the National Bloc, but in 1930 promulgated a constitution largely based on the Bloc's proposal. The next task was the negotiation of a treaty to govern relations between an independent Syria and France. The nationalists and the French could not reach agreement on terms until France agreed to reincorporate the Druze and Alawi regions with the rest of the country in 1936, a watershed year for the mandate. That same year national elections to parliament brought the National Bloc to power for the first time, but the nationalists were to savor their triumph briefly as they encountered difficulties in governing the Druze and Alawi districts as well as the restive Jazira province. To make matters worse, Turkey asserted her claim to Alexandretta, and in 1939 France

allowed its annexation to Turkey in yet another blow to Syrian unity. Moreover, at the end of 1938 the French parliament refused to ratify the Franco-Syrian Treaty of 1936. As World War II approached, the National Bloc fell from power and political stalemate resumed.

The fall of France to Germany in 1940, however, fundamentally weakened its position in Syria, where a pro-Vichy administration assumed authority. The British regarded this regime as a threat to their positions in Iraq and Palestine, so they cooperated with Free French forces under Charles de Gaulle in invading Syria in the summer of 1941. Before and after the invasion, Free French leaders declared their commitment to immediate independence for Syria, but once in control again they temporized. It took a combination of nationalist pressure and British intervention to get the French to allow national elections in preparation for independence in July 1943. But even then, the French stalled on withdrawing their forces before they obtained a treaty to guarantee their special status in an independent Syria. The nationalists' refusal to buckle under French pressure led to a new crisis in May 1945 when French warplanes bombed Damascus. At that point, Great Britain, whose troops vastly outnumbered the French forces, forcibly intervened to wrest a commitment from France to evacuate the country. On 17 April 1946, the last French troops left and Syria was free and independent under an elected government.

The nation had been independent barely two years when events in Palestine plunged Syria into its first war. The creation of the Jewish state of Israel in what was still a predominantly Arab country precipitated military intervention by nearby Arab states. The newly created Syrian army fought the Israelis, but like the armies of Egypt and Transjordan, failed to establish Arab control over Palestine. At the end of the war, Syrian and Israeli representatives met under United Nations auspices and negotiated an armistice that provided for the creation of demilitarized zones in disputed territory along the frontier. Another consequence of the war was the flight of 100,000 Palestinian refugees to Syria. The government tried to make the army a scapegoat for the military failure, and in March 1949 the army struck back with a military coup against the elected government. This event marked the beginning of military intervention in Syrian politics. By the end of the year two more military coups would occur.

The mastermind of 1949's third coup, Adib al-Shishakli, managed to remain in power from December 1949 until February 1954. Following his overthrow, Syria saw the rise and fall of seven cabinets

in four years. Internally, the major issue was social reform, particularly in rural areas where most of the peasantry lived under landlord domination. In foreign relations, the major questions were Syria's alignment in the Arab world and in the cold war between the superpowers. Egypt and Iraq were the leading Arab powers and each country sought advantage by strengthening ties with Syria. Some Syrian politicians favored unity with Iraq, while Egypt and Saudi Arabia supported politicians who opposed alignment with Iraq. Superpower rivalries were imposed on these regional contests, as Great Britain and the United States favored pro-western politicians who tended to look to Iraq for support, while the Soviet Union encouraged neutralist Syrians relying on Egypt to fend off Iraqi bids for union. In the arena of popular opinion, the neutralists, spearheaded by the Arab nationalist Ba'th party, were gaining in popularity, and in the fractious officer corps neutralist sentiment was predominant. Western pressures mounted throughout the period. First, there was a campaign in 1955 to enlist Syria's adherence to the Baghdad Pact, an alliance of Turkey, Iraq, and Great Britain, but Egyptian support and American hesitation allowed Syria to abstain from joining. Then in 1956, Iraq and Britain tried to organize a pro-western coup, but the plot was uncovered and its organizers arrested. Syria then turned to the Soviet Union for diplomatic and economic support as well as military supplies, but this alarmed the United States, whose leadership became convinced that Syria was on the verge of becoming a satellite of Moscow. A full-blown crisis between the United States and Syria erupted in August 1957 when the Syrians expelled three American diplomats for conspiring with politicians and army officers against the government. The United States then persuaded Turkey to mass its troops along the border, a move to which the Soviets responded by threatening Turkey should it attack Syria.

The crisis strengthened the position of those Syrian politicians and army officers who looked to Egypt as a shield against western threats, and in February 1958 a Syrian delegation to Cairo negotiated a merger with Egyptian president Gamal Abd al-Nasir, forming the United Arab Republic. This experiment in Arab unity lasted three and a half years. It foundered on Syrian resentment of Egyptian political and economic domination, and in September 1961 a secessionist coup took Syria out of the union. In the next eighteen months, three successive civilian politicians governed a restive country and confronted constant interference from army officers and subversion inspired by the

Egyptians. Attempts to curb the military's influence on politics led to the March 1963 coup d'etat by Nasirist and Ba'thist officers. By August, the Ba'thists purged Nasirist officers and suppressed a Nasirist uprising, thereby inaugurating the era of Ba'th Party domination of Syrian politics.

The 1963 "Ba'thist revolution" fundamentally reshaped Syrian politics in that it marked the definitive defeat of the elite political class that had emerged in late Ottoman times, led the struggle for independence, and headed civilian governments since 1946. Power now shifted to men of more humble social origins, many of whom were members of religious minorities. The concentration of power in the Ba'th did not spell the end of political turmoil, for a new phase of struggle within and for control of the Ba'th commenced and sectors of urban society revolted against its rule. Meanwhile the new regime pursued an ambitious policy of social and economic reform, including land reform and nationalization of industries and businesses. In February 1966 the intra-party conflict issued in yet another coup, the expulsion from Syria of the party's founders, and the ascendance of its radical wing, dubbed the neo-Ba'th. This regime marked the farthest swing to the left Syria would see. It deepened the state's control over the economy in the name of socialism, advocated the overthrow of Arab regimes in the name of revolution, and backed Palestinian guerilla raids against Israel; in fact, the neo-Ba'th's provocations of Israel played a key role in precipitating the June 1967 war in which Syria lost territory, the Golan Heights, to Israeli forces. After the war new strains appeared within the regime and in November 1970 yet another coup d'etat resolved intra-party struggle in favor of Hafiz al-Asad, who has been the Syrian president from February 1971 to the present.

The Asad regime backed away from its predecessor's unbridled radicalism in the domestic arena and foreign relations. Asad adopted more liberal economic policies to soften urban middle-class resentment, while maintaining the state's domination of the economy, broadened the spectrum of allowable political discourse, yet retained a monopoly on power, and mended ties with Arab governments. His handling of foreign policy bore fruit in the military cooperation he forged with Egyptian President Anwar Sadat. The two leaders planned a successful surprise attack on Israel in the October 1973 war with the aim of recovering territories lost in the 1967 conflict. The military performance gained Asad credibility in Syria, but it did not succeed in recovering the Golan Heights. Two years later his attention would be

absorbed by the civil war in Lebanon, and he decided to send in a large portion of the Syrian army in June 1976 to prevent the rout of conservative, mostly Christian, forces. Asad's Lebanon policy and his reliance on repressive means to stay in power fueled Sunni resentment that exploded in the Islamist uprising of 1978 to 1982. This posed a serious threat to Asad's rule, but he suppressed it by thoroughly destroying its armed partisans in Hama in February 1982. No sooner had Syria passed through its worst internal crisis than Israel invaded Lebanon four months later in order to expel the Palestine Liberation Organization from that country and to install a government friendly to the Jewish state. Syrian forces fought the Israelis for a few days, then accepted a cease-fire and watched the Israeli siege of Beirut force a Palestinian evacuation. In the long run, however, Asad reversed the military verdict through constant pressure on Israel via his Lebanese allies, and by early 1986 Syria again exercised the dominant role in Lebanon.

Throughout the Ba'thist era Syria was closely aligned with the Soviet Union and on shaky ground with the United States because of the latter's massive military, political, and economic support for Israel. As the cold war entered its denouement and Soviet support for Syria slackened, it appeared that the Asad regime might be fatally weakened in a manner similar to the Soviets' east European satellites. This calculation turned out to be mistaken; indeed, Asad improved relations with the United States in 1990 when he supported American intervention against the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. After the Gulf War, Asad furthered the rehabilitation of relations with the United States when he agreed to attend the Madrid Conference, an international peace conference to begin a negotiated settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict in all its dimensions. While this diplomatic process has not borne fruit on the Syrian-Israeli track, Asad has demonstrated his commitment to it and he has prepared his country for the day it would peacefully coexist with its perennial enemy. Yet whether or not the parties will reach an agreement remains an open question. So does the matter of succession to Asad. In more than thirty years of Ba'thist rule there has not been a constitutional succession, just two coups d'etat. Observers of Syrian politics have spun out various scenarios of what might occur at the moment of succession, but nobody knows how the transfer of power will take place, to whom it will pass, and in what manner it will pass: in a smooth legal fashion, or by violent means. After nearly half a century of independence and a quarter century of rule under one man,

Syrians cannot be certain of their political future after the passing of Hafiz al-Asad.

Population

Syria's current population is about 15 million and increasing at an annual rate of 3.7 percent. About 85 percent of the population is Arab, roughly 10 percent is Kurdish, many of whom are Arabized or can speak Arabic, and about 4 percent are Armenians. In religious terms, close to 70 percent of Syrians are Sunni Muslims; the Alawis, an offshoot of Shi'i Islam, constitute about 12 percent of the population. Christians count for perhaps 14 percent and Druzes for 3 percent of the total population. Isma'ilis, Twelver or Imami Shi'is, Yazidis, and Jews comprise a tiny minority. The distribution of different language and religious groups is quite varied. The Druzes and Alawis, for instance, both Arabic-speakers, have each comprised the overwhelming majority in particular regions, while Christians and Sunnis are dispersed throughout various towns and rural districts. The Kurds have been concentrated in the Jazira in the northeast, while most Armenians live in Aleppo and Damascus. For much of Syrian history, remote areas provided refuges for members of religious minorities. Occasionally, Sunni rulers would try to impose their authority, but in general it was not until the twentieth century that the Druzes, the Alawis, and the Arab and Kurdish inhabitants of the Jazira lost their communal autonomy. The political integration of Syria's diverse population under urban Sunni domination occurred during the French Mandate and early independence years. Since the 1960s, provincial Sunnis and members of minorities have turned the tables by seizing power through control over the military and the Ba'th party. Forging a common Syrian identity is an ongoing project that the government fosters through education and the media. Social interaction among Syrians of different religious backgrounds has certainly become more frequent, and a secular culture has made inroads, but communal boundaries remain firm when it comes to marriage.

The Dictionary

A

ABBASID DYNASTY.

The greatest of the classical Islamic dynasties, the Abbasids overthrew the Umayyad dynasty and held the caliphate from 750 to 1258. On coming to power, they moved the political center of early Islamic civilization from Syria to Iraq, where they founded a new city, Baghdad, as the imperial capital in 754. During the first century of Abbasid rule, a number of revolts erupted in Syria. These represented resentment against Syria's reduction from imperial center to provincial status and attempts by Umayyad loyalists to regain power. Syria began to move out of the Abbasid orbit during the time of Ahmad ibn Tulun (d. 884), a Turkish soldier assigned the task of collecting revenue and keeping order in Egypt on behalf of the caliph. He quelled a number of revolts in Syria, extended his authority there, and made a show of loyalty to the caliph, but in fact he ruled as an autonomous governor and established the short-lived Tulunid dynasty (868-905) over Egypt and Syria.

The Abbasids regained control over Syria in 905 and ruled it directly for thirty years. Then a military commander named Muhammad ibn Tughj (d. 945), whose ancestors came from eastern Iran, established another autonomous line of governors known as the Ikhshidids. Ibn Tughj first arrived in Syria in 910 as a deputy governor. He governed Syria effectively and cultivated allies at the Abbasid court in Baghdad in order to secure appointment as governor of Egypt and Syria with the pre-Islamic Persian title of *ikhshid*. In the next decade Ibn Tughj consolidated control over Egypt and southern Syria (Damascus and Palestine) while he acknowledged Hamdanid supremacy in the north. After his death, his successors governed much of Syria for another quarter century until the Qarmatis dislodged them in 969. While the Abbasid caliphate endured in Baghdad for three more centuries, its effective rule over Syria was over.

ABD AL-MALIK IBN MARWAN (c. 646-705).

The fourth Umayyad caliph (r. 685-705). He consolidated power for the Marwanid branch (named for his father) of the Umayyad dynasty. His first achievement was to reestablish authority over Iraq, which had thrown off Umayyad rule two years earlier. Abd al-Malik prepared the ground for an assault on Iraq by arranging a truce with the Byzantines on his northern flank. He then led Syrian forces into Iraq and defeated his rivals in 691. The following year, his army overcame the forces of a rival claimant to the caliphate in Mecca.

After suppressing challenges to the Umayyad dynasty, Abd al-Malik placed its rule on firmer footing with a series of centralizing administrative reforms. First he introduced Arabic as the language of administration, whereas previous caliphs had employed Greek and Persian scribes. Second, he ordered the minting of a new Islamic coinage to replace Byzantine gold and Persian silver coins. Abd al-Malik's most enduring legacy stems from his order to construct the Dome of the Rock, Jerusalem's chief Islamic religious complex, long considered the third holiest site in the Muslim world after the western Arabian shrines at Mecca and Medina.

ABDULHAMID II (1842-1918).

Ottoman ruler from 1876-1909. He gained the throne on 1 September 1876 by agreeing with a powerful clique of military and civilian officials to promulgate a constitution for the Ottoman Empire. Abdulhamid indeed proclaimed the constitution on 23 December 1876, but he then dismissed from office the same men who had made him sultan. He did, however, proceed with constitutional government for a brief time. An elected bicameral parliament, which included nine deputies from Syria, convened in March 1877. Less than a year later, on 14 February 1878, Abdulhamid dissolved parliament and suspended the constitution.

For most of Abdulhamid's reign, Syria saw little unrest, largely because of his strategy of combining a conservative

religious policy of supporting popular Muslim institutions with technical modernization, which had commenced during the Tanzimat era. In pursuit of his religious policy, the sultan paid for the construction of many new mosques and patronized popular Sufi orders by funding the construction of new lodges, the repair of older ones, and the renovation of holy men's tombs. He also granted members of the Rifa'iyya Sufi order exemption from military service. See SAYYADI, ABU ALHUDA.

In the realm of modernization, provincial governors presided over the construction and, where needed, renovation of government offices, courts, and barracks. Urban renewal was another object of imperial attention as rickety bazaars were demolished and reconstructed and rectilinear street systems were installed. Projects to develop the network of carriage roads, initiated by Midhat Pasha, continued throughout the 1880s. The sultan also granted concessions to European companies to construct railways and ports (see TRANSPORTATION), and these projects gave a boost to trade by vastly reducing transport costs and time. Other modernizing ventures included the introduction of electricity to Damascus and the construction of a tramway in the city. Abdulhamid also oversaw the expansion of government schools throughout the province, including teacher training schools and a military preparatory school. The purpose of expanding state education was to discourage attendance at foreign mission schools, which did not inculcate loyalty to the sultan; in fact, Christian mission schools frequently encouraged allegiance to European nations.

Abdulhamid's reign was also important for Syria because he reorganized the provincial administration. He detached southern Palestine from Damascus in 1887 when he created a special district with its capital at Jerusalem. The following year he created a coastal province extending from Latakia to Acre, with Beirut as the capital. This left a southern province centered on Damascus, stretching from Hama to Maan in present-day Jordan, and a northern province with Aleppo as its capital.

In the later years of Sultan Abdulhamid's reign, the Ottoman constitutional movement was revived by the Committee of Union and Progress. This organization infiltrated the Ottoman officer corps and recruited widely among younger men who believed in constitutional rule as the solution to the empire's many problems. In June 1908, the CUP inspired a number of mutinies in the Balkans, and on 24 July 1908 the rebellious officers forced Abdulhamid to restore the 1876 constitution. The following April, a conservative coup bent on restoring absolute power to Abdulhamid ousted the constitutional government in Istanbul and the provincial centers, but ultimately the bid for an absolutist restoration failed when officers loyal to the constitution marched on Istanbul. On 28 April 1909 the parliament deposed Sultan Abdulhamid, the last Ottoman sultan to effectively wield power, and exiled him, first to Salonika, then in 1912 to a palace near Istanbul, where he died in February 1918.

ABID, AHMAD IZZAT AL- (1851-1924).

Syrian adviser to Ottoman Sultan Abdulhamid II. Before his acquaintance with the sultan, Abid worked in the bureau of Turkish and Arabic correspondence and published the first private newspaper in Damascus from 1879 to 1887. He was serving as a judge on the central court of appeals in Istanbul when he entered the entourage of the sultan in 1894 through a connection with Abu al-Huda al-Sayyadi, another Syrian adviser at the imperial court. Abid became the most powerful figure in distributing posts, especially in the judicial administration, in the Syrian provinces. He counseled the sultan to adopt pro-German and pan-Islamic policies, but he is best known for developing the idea of a rail link between Damascus and Mecca to be constructed entirely with donations from Muslims. Known as the Hijaz Railway, this project was completed as far as Medina when the project was terminated in 1908. After the 1908 constitutional revolution, Abid fled to Egypt, but he returned to the center stage of Ottoman political life at the end of World War I when he became the grand vizier and negotiated the armistice.

ABID, MUHAMMAD ALI AL- (1868-1939).

Son of Ahmad Izzat al-Abid and first president of the Syrian republic from 1932-1936. In the late Ottoman era he served in a number of high government positions, including Ottoman minister to the United States, and he was closely associated with Sultan Abdulhamid. From the time of the 1908 Ottoman constitutional revolution until 1919, Abid lived in Europe. He played little role in politics during the early years of the French Mandate. In November 1931, French High Commissioner Henri Ponsot announced that national elections would be held in December 1931-January 1932. The National Bloc won seventeen out of sixty-nine seats, the remainder going to independents and figures willing to collaborate with the French. Under the constitution of 1930, the parliament elected the president of the republic. The National Bloc and the French authorities agreed on Muhammad Ali al-Abid as a compromise candidate in June 1932. The major political issue during his four-year term was the negotiation of a Franco-Syrian Treaty to regulate relations in the event of Syria attaining independence. In September 1936, preliminary agreement on terms of the treaty was reached. National elections to parliament, which would have to ratify the treaty, were held in November, and the National Bloc won a huge victory. When the nationalist parliament convened in December, Abid resigned the presidency to make way for Bloc leader Hashim al-Atasi.

ABU FIRAS AL-HAMDANI (932-968).

A renowned poet and member of the Hamdanid dynasty that ruled northern Syria from Aleppo. His poetry celebrated the accomplishments of his kinsman Sayf al-Dawla, ruler of Aleppo from 945 to 967, and whose entourage included the great poet al-Mutanabbi. Sayf al-Dawla appointed Abu Firas governor of Manbij, a district close to the frontier with the Byzantines. In the course of fighting these perennial enemies of the Muslims, the Hamdanid prince-poet was captured in 962. During his four-year captivity, Abu Firas composed some of his finest verse, much of which clearly shows al-Mutanabbi's influence. In 966, Sayf al-Dawla paid the Byzantines a ransom to free his

cousin. Two years later the ruler died and his son Abu alMa'ali took over Aleppo. Abu Firas quarreled with him and raised a revolt in Homs, but the ruler's troops captured and killed him.

ADONIS (1930-).

Pen name of Ali Ahmad Sa'id, a leading poet and literary critic. He was born in a small village near Latakia and studied philosophy and literature at the University of Damascus. In 1956, Adonis moved to Lebanon to found a poetry journal. He soon gained a wide reputation for his free verse, symbolist poetry that explores political, social, and metaphysical concerns. In 1977 he published a landmark three-volume work on Arab culture entitled *The Permanent and the Changing: A Study of Arab Conformity and Creativity*. Since 1986, Adonis has been living in Paris. His poetry has been translated into more than a dozen languages. He is also one of the Arab world's leading literary critics, and his work *Arab Poetics* has been translated into English and French.

AFLAQ, MICHEL (1910-1989).

The co-founder of the Ba'th Party. This Greek Orthodox Christian native of Damascus studied at the Sorbonne in Paris from 1929 to 1934. On his return to Damascus to teach history at a public secondary school, he attracted pupils to his call for Arab unity, liberation from colonial rule, and social justice. In 1947, he and fellow schoolteacher Salah al-Din al-Bitar turned their movement into the Arab Renaissance (Ba'th) Party.

During the party's first two decades, Aflaq held the position of secretary-general and remained its intellectual inspiration while staying out of the main political arena. He never ran for parliament and served only briefly as minister of education in 1949. In the United Arab Republic era, when the Syrian branch of the party voluntarily dissolved itself, Aflaq spent most of his time in Beirut guiding the party's National Command and holding aloof from UAR policies. The Syrian Ba'th reemerged after the breakup of the UAR, but Aflaq no longer enjoyed the authority of the party's senior statesman because a younger generation of party members, including the secret Military Committee, resented his earlier

dissolution of the party and clove to more radical social ideas. These younger factions would challenge Aflaq and Bitar's leadership after the party seized power in the wake of the March 8, 1963 coup. For instance, the Syrian Regional Command was reconstituted in 1963, but Aflaq was not included, and in May 1965 Aflaq resigned as secretary-general of the party's National Command. When his allies tried to restore the supremacy of the old guard, the Military Committee and its allies struck in the February 23, 1966 coup, creating a permanent split in the party. The neo-Ba'th rulers imprisoned many of their former comrades, but they allowed Aflaq to leave the country, never to return. His exile began in Beirut and continued in Brazil until the Iraqi branch of the Ba'th seized power in 1968. Its leaders invited him to Baghdad and named him secretary-general of the party. Aflaq spent most of the next seven years in Beirut and moved to Iraq when the Lebanese Civil War erupted in 1975. Baghdad's Ba'thist rulers treated him as an honored guest for the remainder of his life.

Aflaq's writings show traces of both Marxist and German romantic nationalist influences. According to Aflaq, Arab unity had to come about through a fundamental reform of the personality of Arabs that would occur if they could transcend their divisive loyalties (to religion, clan, or region). Arab freedom means both national independence and personal political freedoms of speech, assembly, and belief. As for socialism, it comprises an intrinsic element of Arab nationalism, but Arabs must adapt socialist ideas to their own particular circumstances. The party's 1947 constitution included articles calling for equitable distribution of wealth, state control over foreign trade, and limits on rural landholdings, yet it also recognized the legitimacy of private property.

AGHA.

This Turkish term refers to a chief or master. In Syrian usage, it denoted the leader of a local janissary unit or other urban militia from the seventeenth to early nineteenth centuries. Aghas emerged when imperial janissaries blended with provincial urban populations during the seventeenth

century. In Syrian towns the aghas' command of military power gave them political influence and the means to control economic resources. In Damascus, for instance, the aghas came to dominate the grain trade that fed the city. Their local power became evident in the aftermath of an August 1831 uprising against an Ottoman initiative to impose a new tax. The city's aghas murdered the Ottoman governor and formed a local government. They then exploited their control over grain storehouses to create artificial shortages and drive up food prices. Long lines at bakeries led to bread riots. The aghas' extortionate reign came to an end in June 1832 when Egyptian troops commanded by Ibrahim Pasha occupied the city. During the Tanzimat era (1839-1876), the Ottomans gradually reduced the aghas' power and slowly assimilated them into the empire's new administrative structures. By the end of the century, they no longer constituted a distinct social category.

AGRICULTURE.

Until recent decades most Syrians throughout history have worked in agriculture as small landowners, tenants, sharecroppers, and laborers, and the bulk of the country's wealth came from agricultural production. About 80 percent of Syrian agriculture depends on annually varying rainfall, so production fluctuates from year to year. For example, a bumper grain crop of 2.8 million tons in 1988 was followed by a year of drought and a crop of only 1 million tons in 1989. There are two main zones of rain-fed agriculture. One is a narrow band that runs northward from the Hawran along the foothills of the Anti-Lebanon range to central Syria in the vicinities of Homs, Hama, and Aleppo and then spreads eastward into Jazira. This large region includes Damascus and its Ghuta oasis; the Orontes River valley and a vast lowland of drained marshes called the Ghab; and Jazira in the northeast. The second zone, which runs between the borders of Lebanon and Turkey, is the thin coastal strip and the western slopes of mountains rising above the sea. This region produces cotton, tobacco, fruits, and olives. A small proportion of cultivated land has been irrigated by Syria's major rivers since ancient times, and since

World War II that proportion has increased, particularly along the Euphrates and Khabur rivers and in the Ghab.

Wheat is the most widely grown crop, particularly in the region from Homs to Aleppo and in Jazira along the Euphrates and Khabur rivers. Barley is the second most widely cultivated cereal, usually grown in areas that receive less rainfall. The second major crop and one of Syria's chief exports is cotton, two-thirds of which is grown on irrigated lands along the Euphrates and Khabur rivers and on rain-fed lands between Aleppo and Hama. In 1965, cotton accounted for 43 percent of Syria's exports. Even though the value of cotton exports continued to grow in the 1970s, its significance in exports diminished. By 1972, it had fallen to one-third of exports, largely because of the development of petroleum. Tobacco, grown in the mountains around Latakia, is another export crop. Olives are grown primarily in the hills near Aleppo and Idlib. Other crops include millet, lentils, and sugar beets, the latter of which are processed into sugar.

Since World War II the amount of land under cultivation has grown from 1.75 million hectares in 1953, to 5.9 million in 1969, and to 6.2 million in 1980. Most of this expansion took place in the first decade of independence when private landowners in Homs, Hama, and Aleppo invested in agricultural machinery to open the northeast. The investment of "tractor capitalists" resulted in gains in grain and cotton production. Efforts to extend cultivation by investing in irrigation projects have achieved mixed results. (See EUPHRATES RIVER, GHAB.)

Even though Syrian agriculture has expanded in recent decades, its overall part in the Syrian economy has fallen from 35 percent of gross domestic product in 1953-1959, to 26 percent in 1960-1973, to 20 percent in 1974-1980. This relative decline is due to increases in the commercial, mining, and manufacturing sectors. In 1972, agricultural goods made up half of Syria's exports, but after 1974, oil surpassed agriculture, which in 1980 comprised just 13 percent of exports. Another measure of the relative decline in agriculture's role in the Syrian economy is the proportion of labor engaged in this sector. Before 1960, 60 percent of the

labor force worked in agriculture; by 1979, that figure had fallen to 31 percent. In the early 1990s, agriculture engaged only 23 percent of the labor force.

AHMAD PASHA "AL-JAZZAR" (d. 1804).

Ottoman governor of southern Syria in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Born in Bosnia, he began his rise to prominence in Istanbul by attracting the notice of an Ottoman official. He later entered the company of the mamluks in Egypt, but in 1768 he fell out with his patron and went to Syria, where the Ottomans appointed him governor of the coastal province of Sidon in 1775. Various circumstances allowed Ahmad Pasha to become the dominant figure in southern Syria for nearly three decades. One was the increase in trade to Europe in agricultural products. His control over Syrian ports enabled him to skim a rich revenue in customs taxes, which he used to enlarge the military resources at his disposal. He also benefited from Istanbul's declining ability to exercise authority over the provinces. In the face of challenges from the insubordinate mamluks in Egypt, Wahhabi raids from Arabia, wars with Russia, and Napoleon Bonaparte's invasion, the Ottomans experimented with different administrative solutions to the problem of keeping order in Syria. One option was to place the usually separate provinces of Sidon and Damascus under a single governor. Thus, Ahmad Pasha was governor of southern Syria from 1785 to 1786, 1790 to 1795, and 1801 to 1804. He established himself at the port of Acre and built up its fortifications to make it a formidable stronghold. In the 1790s he maneuvered to extend his authority over Lebanon, but his endeavors were interrupted by Napoleon's 1799 invasion. Following his successful defense of Acre against a French siege, in 1801 the Ottomans again appointed him governor of Damascus, which he remained until his death in 1804. His brutal methods of extracting revenues, extorting wealth, and keeping order gained him the nickname "*aljazzar*," the butcher.

AJNADAYN, BATTLE OF.

This was the first major battle between Arab Muslim and Byzantine forces. Although the Arab

chroniclers give different dates, most historians assign the battle to July 634, at a site 35 km southwest of Jerusalem. Byzantine forces included the brother of the emperor and other dignitaries, but the Arabs decisively defeated them. The Arab victory opened the way for their conquest of Palestine and Syria.

ALAWI.

Syria's largest heterodox Muslim sect. They currently account for roughly 12 percent of the population. Around 75 percent of the Alawis live in Latakia province, where they comprise 60 percent of the population. There are also Alawi communities in the Akkar region of northern Lebanon and in southeastern Turkey. In Syria they are divided into four tribal confederations: the Kalbiyya, the Khayatin, the Haddadin, and the Matawira. Members of this sect call themselves followers of Ali, but Sunnis and Shi'is, who consider them heretics, call them Nusayris, followers of Muhammad ibn Nusayr, a tenth-century Shi'i propagandist.

Muhammad ibn Nusayr (d. 883), a Persian who spent most of his life in Iraq, claimed to be the "door," or means of access, to the eleventh Shi'i imam, who, Twelver Shi'is believe, had gone into occultation in 873. Later followers brought the sect to northern Syria in the tenth century. AlHusayn ibn Hamdan al-Khasibi (d. 957) was the key figure in spreading the sect in Syria after he settled in Hamdanid Aleppo. In 1031, a later Alawi leader moved from Aleppo to Latakia, whence the sect spread into the mountains behind the city that have since become known as Jabal Nusayri or Jabal Ansariyya.

Alawi texts reveal a heterodox version of Shi'ism that is distinguished by belief in a trinity of Ali as the divine incarnation, Muhammad as the Prophet, and Salman al-Farsi as the propagator of religion. Alawi interpretation of the Qur'an posits an esoteric meaning of certain verses, which in their reading establish the special status of Ali and his descendants. Moreover, they believe in cycles of revelation that began with Adam, continued with Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus, and ended with Muhammad. According to the Alawis, each cycle represented an advance over the

previous one to correspond with advances in human society. They explain their differences from other Muslims by claiming that they possess secret knowledge of religion that others are not fit to receive. Like the Druzes, the Alawis recognize a spiritual hierarchy that possesses and transmits esoteric knowledge, while ordinary believers are familiar with simpler aspects of the religion. Unlike Muslims, the Alawis do not observe prayer in mosques, fast during Ramadan, or perform the pilgrimage to Mecca.

For centuries the Alawis fended off attempts by Sunni rulers to impose their authority. In the early twentieth century they rallied to Shaykh Salih al-Ali's revolt against French rule. After France suppressed his movement in 1921, the French Mandate authorities created a separate Territory of the Alawites, thereby perpetuating their traditional political separation from the rest of Syria. Under this regime, the French created religious courts that were supposed to apply Twelver Shi'i jurisprudence on the grounds that Alawis were part of that branch of Shi'ism. In 1936, France dissolved the separate administration for the Alawis and united their region, as the province of Latakia, with the rest of Syria under the terms of the Franco-Syrian Treaty. When the National Bloc government appointed a Sunni Muslim as governor of the province, there were protests by Alawis, and a revolt erupted under the leadership of Sulayman al-Murshid. In July 1939, the National Bloc government resigned, and France reestablished an autonomous regime for the Alawis, but the region was permanently reunited with the rest of Syria in February 1942. In independent Syria, the Alawis obtained legal recognition for their Twelver Shi'i courts in 1952.

Since the early 1960s Alawi members of the armed forces and the Ba'th Party have played a dominant role in Syrian politics. In 1971 Hafiz al-Asad became the first Alawi head of state. He has attempted to gain recognition as a fullfledged Muslim, but conservative Sunni opponents continue to regard him and his coreligionists as heretics determined to destroy Islam (see MUSLIM BROTHERS).

ALEPPO.

The Arabic name is Halab. It is on the banks of a minor river, the Quwayk, that flows from the Taurus Mountains of nearby Turkey. The city lies in a semiarid region that receives enough rainfall to grow wheat, cotton, olives, vines, and its famous pistachios. Aleppo's proximity to the northern reaches of the Syrian desert has made it a market town for bedouin for centuries.

Aleppo is one of the world's most ancient cities, being mentioned in twentieth-century B.C. Egyptian texts. It is famous for its citadel, which dominates the area from a rocky height and has provided a defensive stronghold for townsfolk and garrisons many times over the centuries. In the second millennium B.C., Aleppo came under Mitanni and then Hittite rule. An Aramaean city-state flourished in the early first millennium, but it was conquered by Assyrian invaders in the ninth century and the city did not regain prominence until the Seleucid era.

The Arabs conquered Aleppo in 636, but its Muslim population grew more slowly than in other Syrian towns. For a time, Aleppo was the capital of a northern Syrian dynasty, the Hamdanids in the tenth century, but it then entered an era of strife and violence because of warfare between the Byzantines and Muslim dynasties and among local factions. The city did not recover until the middle of the twelfth century under the atabegs. Sultan Nur al-Din Mahmud established the city's first six madrasas as well as Sufi convents and a hospital. The city enjoyed a period of great prosperity and expansion during Ayyubid rule in the thirteenth century, when the citadel was completely rebuilt and repaired and various markets were renovated. This era abruptly ended with a Mongol attack at the beginning of 1260. In the next several years, Aleppo passed between the hands of the Mamluks and Mongols, and during their wars the citadel again was destroyed.

Aleppo received a new boost under Ottoman rule when it became the center of its own province and a nexus for trade between the Orient and Europe. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Venetian, French, British, and Dutch consulates and trading stations were established. Aleppo's

role as a transit center for international trade declined in the last quarter of the eighteenth century. In the Tanzimat era, Aleppo was the scene of a major uprising against local Christians in 1850. When France and Great Britain drew the boundaries of modern Syria at the end of World War I they severed Aleppo from its natural hinterland of southern Turkey and northern Iraq; the city received a further blow with the 1939 cession of Alexandretta to Turkey, thereby losing its traditional Mediterranean port. Since independence, the city has developed into a major industrial center and its population has grown from 300,000 in 1945 to nearly 2 million. The city has a large Christian minority, including many Armenians.

ALEPPO MASSACRE OF 1850.

On 17-18 October 1850, Muslim crowds attacked a Christian suburb of Aleppo in the city's only instance of communal riots in the Ottoman era. The Ottoman authorities had recently completed the first census on Aleppo's adult males and there was widespread apprehension that a broad conscription would follow. A crowd of Muslims gathered before the governor's building to protest, but the governor refused to deal with them, and they proceeded to Judayda, the prosperous quarter of Uniate Christian merchants. There the mob entered homes and churches, plundered and looted, and murdered between ten and seventy Christians. As word of the atrocities spread, Christians living in other quarters took refuge in the homes of Muslim neighbors and in the commercial district. On 19 October, the leader of the local janissary faction headed off further violence by promising to present the Ottoman governor with the crowd's demands, including a promise not to carry out conscription and to prohibit public processions by Christians. A brief calm was broken by a second round of violence in the first days of November when fighting erupted between janissary and ashraf factions. By that time Ottoman reinforcements had arrived and they forcibly repressed the quarreling factions. The authorities arrested around six hundred men for their part in the riots and punished them by drafting some and exiling the others. They also demanded the restoration of stolen property, but little of it was recovered.

In the months after the massacre, several hundred Christians emigrated from the city to settle in Beirut and Izmir.

Historians explain the unusual communal outbreak as a consequence of Ottoman reform and Tanzimat policies, including the 1826 abolition of the janissaries that damaged the economic and social standing of Aleppo's deeply entrenched janissary faction; and the imposition of a capital tax on Muslims, who perceived the measure as signaling a threat to their customary superiority to Christians, who always paid such a tax. Economic tendencies may also have played a role. The city's Uniate Christians prospered from the growing trade with Europe in the 1840s, and their good fortune may have incited the envy of the city's Muslims.

ALEXANDRETTA.

In Arabic Iskanderun, in Turkish Hatay, the term refers to both the city and the province, or *sanjak*, currently located in southeastern Turkey. The port city of Alexandretta historically served as Aleppo's outlet to the Mediterranean. By the early twentieth century, the Sanjak's population consisted of Turks, Sunni Arabs, Alawis, Christian Arabs, and Armenians. After the destruction of the Ottoman Empire, both the Turkish Republic and Syria under the French Mandate claimed the territory. As part of the Franklin-Bouillon Agreement of 1921, France pledged to safeguard the status of the Sanjak's Turks. By the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne, Turkey recognized the international boundary that assigned Alexandretta to Syria. In the various administrative arrangements of the early French Mandate, the Sanjak was part of the Syrian state and did not have a special autonomous status like that in Jabal Druze or Jabal Ansariyya.

Controversy over Alexandretta's status erupted following the negotiation of the Franco-Syrian Treaty of 1936, which alarmed the Turkish government because it appeared to portend the permanent absorption of the Sanjak into an independent Arab country and made no provision for continuing its special status. Popular sentiment in Turkey favored its annexation, a view the government eventually adopted. The League of Nations approved a new independent

regime for Alexandretta in November 1937. Several months later, France's alarm at Italy's expanding ambitions led to the conclusion of the July 1938 Franco-Turkish Friendship Treaty by which France agreed to the introduction of Turkish troops into the Sanjak. There followed the opening of a local parliament with the Turkish majority that France had promised to Turkey. Over the next several months, the parliament gradually merged the province with Turkey through economic and judicial legislation. In June 1939, France completely withdrew from the province, paving the way for Turkey to annex it. Syrian nationalists vehemently condemned France's surrender of this province, and the episode became a lasting point of friction between Turkey and Syria.

ALI IBN ABI TALIB (c. 600-661).

The cousin and son-in-law of the Prophet Muhammad, Ali emerged in the years after Muhammad's death as a leader in Muslim affairs. His later followers claimed that he was the rightful successor to Muhammad's supreme leadership, but that others usurped his legitimate claim to the caliphate. After the murder of the third caliph Uthman in 656, Ali became the fourth caliph, but the slain caliph's kinsmen, the Umayyads, demanded that Ali bring Uthman's assassins to justice before they would recognize his authority. Ultimately, Ali led an army against the Umayyads at the 657 Battle of Siffin, but the engagement reached an inconclusive end when the parties agreed to arbitration. A number of Ali's followers seceded from his movement and became his enemies because they condemned his willingness to compromise. This group became known as the Kharijis, and one of them assassinated Ali in 661. Nonetheless, a large section of Muslims remained loyal to Ali and claimed that legitimate religious and political authority continued to reside in his descendants, the imams, or rightful leaders of Muslims. This following became known as *shi'at Ali*, or the party of Ali, hence the term Shi'i for those Muslims who uphold Alid legitimacy. See ALAWI, DRUZE, ISMA'ILI, KHARIJI, NIZARI, QARMATI, SHI'I.

ALI, SHAYKH SALIH AL- (1884-1926).

An Alawi landowner in Jabal Ansariyya, Shaykh Salih led Alawi resistance to the establishment of the French Mandate in order to preserve his community's customary autonomy. In 1919, Shaykh Salih forced a French garrison to abandon its post in the Jabal Ansariyya. With support from regional notables, Amir Faysal's government, and Turkish nationalists fighting the French in southeastern Turkey, the revolt held off the French for two years. Once the French defeated Faysal's forces in July 1920 and occupied Damascus, they concentrated their resources on subduing revolts in various parts of the country, including Shaykh Salih's. The Alawi leader then gained the support of a revolt that erupted west of Aleppo under the leadership of Ibrahim Hananu. But in October 1921 the French ended Turkish support for Shaykh Salih by reaching the Franklin-Bouillon Agreement. With the arrival of French reinforcements in Jabal Ansariyya and outside help no longer available, the revolt fizzled and its leader went into hiding until he was pardoned. He spent the remainder of his life in his home village in Jabal Ansariyya.

ARAB NATIONALISM.

The idea that Arabs comprise a political community distinct from other peoples arose in modern times. It first appeared in Ottoman Syria during the early twentieth century among a handful of intellectuals and a faction of the urban political elites of Damascus and Beirut. The contribution of intellectuals, both secular and religious, was to emphasize the unique role of Arabs and the Arabic language in the history of Islamic civilization. They argued that this role indicated a special status for Arabs in the world, although they did not initially draw the conclusion that the Arabs should secede from the Ottoman Empire. As for the protonationalist politicians, whom historians refer to as Arabists, their identification of particular Arab grievances in the empire had as much to do with intraelite competition for office as ideological conviction. Before World War I the Arabists sought a greater degree of autonomy for Arab provinces and the exclusive use of Arabic in law courts, government offices, and schools. Prewar Arab nationalist societies included al-

Fatat and al-Ahd. The latter group was established in 1913 among Arab military officers, mostly Syrian and Iraqi. Their program was to obtain political autonomy for the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire.

During World War I Arab nationalist activity increased because of the uncertainties surrounding the war's outcome and the prospect that a European power, namely Great Britain, might provide material support for the establishment of an independent Arab kingdom (see ARAB REVOLT, HUSAYNMCMMAHON CORRESPONDENCE). At a 1915 meeting with Amir Faysal in Damascus, Arab nationalists formulated the Damascus Protocol, stating their goals to be British recognition of Arab independence and the end of commercial and fiscal privileges for foreigners and their local protégés. Nonetheless, during the war most Syrians remained loyal to the empire. The Ottoman defeat and occupation of Syria by the forces of Great Britain, France, and Amir Faysal transformed the political landscape and Arab nationalism gained greater popularity. When France occupied Syria two years later, Arab nationalism became the rallying point for resistance to European rule.

During the French Mandate a number of Arab nationalist parties and groups formed, including the League of National Action and the Ba'th Party. In the 1950s, the scope of Arab nationalism broadened beyond the original focus on the Ottoman Arab lands of historical Syria and Iraq to include all Arabic-speaking countries from the Atlantic Ocean to the Persian Gulf. The movement attained its greatest moment in 1958 when Syria merged with Egypt to form the United Arab Republic, but the failure of this union dealt Arab nationalism a severe blow. Later developments in Syria and the region that further weakened the ideology included the 1966 split within the Ba'th Party and the defeat of Arab nationalist regimes in the June 1967 war. Since 1970, the consolidation of durable Arab regimes pursuing disparate policies has further enervated the early vigor of Arab nationalism, although the sentiment can still be tapped, as was demonstrated in the popular Arab reaction against the American-led military assault on Iraq's occupation of Kuwait in 1991. Syria still

officially adheres to an Arab nationalist ideology, but in the 1990s it appears to be spent as a dynamic force in history.

ARAB REVOLT.

In June 1916, forces loyal to the sharif of Mecca, Husayn ibn Ali, launched a revolt against Ottoman rule in western Arabia and seized Mecca. Great Britain had been at war with the Ottoman Empire since November 1914, and British military planners were concerned about the effect of pan-Islamic propaganda on the loyalty of the British Empire's Muslim subjects in Egypt and India. A political-military alliance with the Meccan sharif could only strengthen Britain's war effort. After the exchange of correspondence between Husayn and Sir Henry McMahon, the British high commissioner in Egypt, the sharif plotted his anti-Ottoman revolt (see HUSAYN-MCMAHON CORRESPONDENCE).

Funded and supplied by British agents, the revolt immediately succeeded in seizing control of Mecca, but encountered determined Ottoman resistance at Medina, so Arab forces bypassed that city and marched toward Syria. Husayn's son Faysal played a significant part in leading Arab forces to the capture of Ottoman positions in northern Arabia and southern Syria. In the fall of 1918, Arab forces advanced toward Damascus via Dar'a while British troops pushed the Ottomans out of Palestine. The campaign culminated when Arab forces occupied Damascus on 1 October 1918.

ARAB SOCIALIST PARTY.

Created by Akram al-Hawrani in January 1950 to promote the confiscation of feudal estates and the distribution of land to poor peasants. The party also advocated a neutral foreign policy, secularism, universal education, and the emancipation of women from traditional constraints. The base of this party lay in Hama and surrounding towns among peasants, workers and shopkeepers. Hawrani's backers seized lands and fought off landlords' attempts to regain them. The party received the backing of Adib al-Shishakli when he first came to power in 1949, thus further encouraging the burgeoning peasant movement to take over the land they worked, but in 1952 he dissolved the party. Later that year or in early 1953, Hawrani merged the Arab

Socialists with the Ba'th Party, thus creating the Arab Socialist Renaissance Party and ending the independent existence of the Arab Socialist Party.

ARMED FORCES.

When Syria became independent its armed forces consisted of the Troupes Spéciales created under the French Mandate. At first Sunni Arabs were underrepresented in the army while Alawis and Christians along with Kurds and Circassians had numbers greater than their share in the overall population. In a few years, that imbalance shifted with the admittance of more Sunni Arabs to the military academy at Homs. Under Adib al-Shishakli, universal conscription for two-year service was instituted. While the Syrian army grew during the next ten years, political strife within the officer corps and seemingly perpetual purges, especially between 1955 and 1966, undermined any attempt at instilling professionalism in the armed forces. On the eve of the June 1967 war, the army had about 50,000 troops, 500 tanks, and 100 Soviet war planes. Minister of Defense Hafiz al-Asad then embarked on an ambitious strengthening of the armed forces. At the time of the October 1973 war, Syria had more than 130,000 men under arms with more professional training and command. Although Israeli forces withstood Syria's assault and drove its forces back, the Syrians proved themselves far more formidable foes than they had just six years before.

When Egypt embarked on its path toward a separate peace with Israel in 1978, it meant that Israel could concentrate its military resources against Syria. Consequently, Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad embarked on a massive buildup of the armed forces. In the 1970s and 1980s, Syria spent about 30 percent of its GDP on the armed forces, a total of \$51 billion from 1977 to 1988. From the late 1970s to 1985, Syria doubled the size of its army to about 400,000 men. During the same period, its stock of tanks nearly doubled from 2,300 to 4,050. Syria paid for this with \$22 billion in military aid from oil-rich Arab countries and \$20 billion in civilian aid between 1977 and 1988. This immense amount of Arab aid followed the 1978 Baghdad Summit, which was held to

formulate a policy in response to Egypt's peace treaty with Israel. The Arab countries pledged \$1.8 billion per year to Syria for ten years. Between 1978 and 1981, actual aid came close to that target, but then began to fall because of Syria's support for Iran against Iraq in the first Gulf War and falling oil revenues. Consequently, from 1986 to 1988 Syria received only \$500 million per year, mostly from Saudi Arabia.

Syria's support for Kuwait in the second Gulf War reopened the channels of financial aid, making it possible to purchase arms. A portion of the nearly \$2 billion that came from Saudi Arabia was spent from 1991 to 1992 on arms deals with Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and Russia. As a deterrent against Israeli air raids, the Syrians have obtained surface-to-surface missiles from North Korea and developed chemical warheads. Against these qualitative upgrades, budget constraints have forced the regime to reduce the size of the armed forces to 300,000. The Asad regime will seek further strengthening and improvement of its military power as long as it does not reach a peace agreement with Israel.

ARMÉE DU LEVANT.

The French military force stationed in Syria and Lebanon during the French Mandate era. Some 1,000 French officers commanded troops recruited from colonies in Africa: Senegal, Madagascar, and Morocco. Initially, the Armee du Levant had 70,000 men, but budget constraints forced its reduction to 15,000 in 1924. It remained at that size for most of the mandate period, except for increases during the Great Revolt and World War H.

ARMENIANS.

A non-Arab minority whose ancestral homeland is in present-day Turkey and the Caucasus. There have been small numbers of Armenians in Syria since ancient times, and in the early Islamic period educated Armenians served the Umayyad caliphs as secretaries and administrators. In the Mamluk era, a thriving Armenian community grew in Aleppo, which has remained their main center in Syria to the present. Large numbers of Armenians fled wartime atrocities in Ottoman Turkey during World War I, and a second wave followed in the early 1920s when France withdrew from southeastern

Turkey (Cilicia). By 1925, approximately 50,000 refugees had settled in Aleppo, while others had migrated to towns in Jazira, such as Dayr al-Zur, Hasaka, and Qamishli. In the French Mandate era Armenians encountered animosity from Syrian Arabs because of the willingness of some Armenians to enlist in the *Troupes Spéciales*, which were used to suppress nationalist demonstrations. More recently, the United Arab Republic and Ba'th Party regimes banned Armenian-language newspapers and cultural associations, although Hafiz al-Asad's regime has adopted a more tolerant attitude toward Armenian self-expression. Today the Armenians comprise about 4 percent of Syria's population and mostly belong to the Armenian Orthodox Church (also called the Gregorian church), although a small number, perhaps 15 percent of the Armenians, adhere to the Uniate Armenian Catholic Church.

ARMISTICE OF 1949.

At the end of the Palestine War of 1948, Egypt, Lebanon, and Jordan negotiated armistice agreements with Israel under United Nations supervision at Rhodes. Syria, however, did not attend those negotiations, but it did agree in March 1949 to hold talks with Israel. The talks were conducted under the newly installed regime of Husni al-Za'im, who had seized power on 30 March. Representatives met near the Syrian-Israeli cease-fire lines on 5 April. Israel wanted the Syrians to evacuate land they had occupied in the fighting because this land lay inside the borders of Palestine agreed upon by Great Britain and France in the early 1920s. Behind the scenes, Za'im made some surprising offers to the Israelis. He told them that Syria would permanently absorb 300,000 Palestinian refugees and settle them in the northeastern region of Jazira, far from the border with Israel. In return he sought border adjustments and financial support to integrate the refugees. He also offered to begin direct negotiations at the highest level of representation with the aim of a peace treaty, not just an armistice. Israel's leaders, however, insisted on a Syrian withdrawal before any further steps, so the talks stalled. In the end Syria and Israel signed an agreement on 20 July 1949. Its terms provided for the creation of demilitarized zones in areas occupied by Syrian

forces during the war and for the formation of a Mixed Armistice Commission with two representatives from each country and a United Nations chairman. The two parties maintained their claims to sovereignty over the zones, so the armistice agreement deferred a final settlement to later negotiations. Such talks never took place, and Israel eventually asserted its control over those lands by force.

ARSLAN, ADIL (1882-1954).

Arslan came from a family of Lebanese Druze notables. He remained loyal to the Ottoman Empire during World War I and served Amir Faysal as governor of Mount Lebanon and political adviser between 1918 and 1920. A leading figure in the Istiqlal Party, he left Syria at the beginning of the French Mandate and went to Transjordan, where he became a close adviser to Amir Abdallah. In 1923, the British pressured Abdallah to expel him, and he moved to the Hijaz. He then became active in the Syrian-Palestine Congress, particularly its radical pan-Arab wing that maintained a keen interest in Palestine's fate as well as that of Syria. During the Great Revolt of 1925-1927 against French rule, Arslan went to Jerusalem to raise funds for the nationalist cause. In the 1930s, he joined the National Bloc and became Syria's envoy to Ankara under the government of 1936-1939. He held a number of high government offices in the early years of independence, including foreign minister under Husni al-Za'im in 1949. Soon after taking power, Za'im had Arslan approach the Iraqis about the possibility of a Syrian-Iraqi union, but Za'im suddenly switched to an anti-Hashemite stance. Arslan's early pan-Arabism also manifested itself when he refused to support Za'im's secret diplomacy with Israel.

ARSLAN, SHAKIB (1869-1946).

Perhaps the most prominent activist for Muslim political causes between the world wars. Born into a prominent Druze family in Lebanon, Shakib Arslan's upbringing and aspirations led him to become a Sunni Muslim. His high birth entitled him to important offices in the Druze districts of Lebanon during the late Ottoman era, when he also gained a reputation as the "prince of eloquence"

for his masterly prose. In 1911 Arslan volunteered to join Ottoman forces resisting the Italian invasion of Libya. When he arrived there, he developed a close relationship with Ottoman officers, especially Enver Pasha, who soon after became a member of the Committee of Union and Progress triumvirate, which ruled the empire from 1913 to 1918. During World War I Arslan staunchly supported the empire against Arab nationalists and bitterly opposed the Arab Revolt and its Hashemite leadership. He believed that a strong Ottoman Empire was the Arabs' only hope for preventing direct European rule and he condemned the Arab Revolt as a betrayal of Arabs and Islam. Arslan's earlier acquaintance with Enver Pasha put him in good stead with Jamal Pasha, another member of the CUP triumvirate and military governor of Syria for much of the war. His loyalty to the empire and association with Jamal Pasha caused many Syrians to blame him for the governor's harsh policies, including deportations and executions of suspected nationalists.

The end of the war found Arslan in Germany, and for the next few years he roamed restlessly between Europe and Turkey in search of a viable political cause. During the French Mandate era he made his first commitment to an Arab cause by joining the Syrian-Palestine Congress and eventually became one of its representatives to the League of Nations, in large part because he had settled down in Switzerland. When the Great Revolt erupted in 1925, Arslan publicized the Syrian cause in European newspapers and petitioned the League of Nations' body responsible for mandates, the Permanent Mandates Commission. In November 1925, though, Arslan aroused anger and jealousy in other leaders of the Syrian-Palestine Congress when he agreed to meet with French High Commissioner Henry de Jouvenel. Their talks resulted in an agreement wherein Arslan insisted on the unity and independence of Syria and Palestine, but conceded the permanence of Greater Lebanon, a French monopoly on military assistance to Syria, and a thirty-year military alliance. This accord never developed into an official French offer, but it did deepen divisions within the Congress

between Arslan's pro-Saudi faction and Abd al-Rahman Shahbandar's pro-Hashemite group.

After the suppression of the Great Revolt, Arslan continued to argue Syria's case before the League of Nations, but he also widened his concerns and became an active inspiration to Arab nationalist movements in North Africa. He did return briefly to Syria in 1937 when the French authorities sought his support for the Franco-Syrian Treaty, but his public statements on Palestine and other Arab causes made him unwelcome, and the French asked him to leave before the end of the year.

During World War II Arslan again sided with Germany, this time in the belief that its victory would bring independence to Arabs struggling against French and British imperialism, but he was no longer the effective spokesmen of earlier years. Indeed, he spent most of the war in Switzerland fretting over financial difficulties. In October 1946, Arslan left Switzerland for Beirut, where he died two months later.

ARSUZI, ZAKI AL- (1901-1968).

Alawi teacher and political activist from Alexandretta and educated at the Sorbonne in Paris. After his studies in France, Arsuzi resided in Antioch and worked as a schoolteacher. From 1938 to 1939, he led the pan-Arab League of National Action's efforts to oppose Turkey's annexation of Alexandretta. After several arrests, Arsuzi left his home province and resettled in Damascus. There he emerged as a leading figure among intellectuals and students in favor of Arab unity and revival. He used the term *ba'th*, or rebirth, when speaking of Arab revival, and his followers claim that Michel Aflaq stole the term from Arsuzi. Their ideas had a certain affinity, but the two men never worked together because of personal differences. Consequently, many of Arsuzi's followers, mostly young Alawi students, would join the Ba'th Party, while Arsuzi himself never again became active in politics. He spent his later years in poverty, devoting his energies to a work on the Arabic language. The neo-Ba'th regime, which included many Alawis loyal to him, granted him a pension to support him until his death in 1968.

ASAD, HAFIZ AL- (1930-).

President of Syria since February 1971, he came to power in the corrective movement of November 1970. Asad was born in Qurdaha, a village in Jabal Ansariyya, the historical home of the Alawis. Asad got his education in the nearby city of Latakia, where he met the Ba'thist teacher Wahib al-Ghanim, who imparted the ideas of Zaki al-Arsuzi and recruited Asad to the Ba'th Party. In 1951, Asad entered the Military Academy at Homs and enrolled in a special training course for pilots in Syria's nascent air force. For the next several years, he remained active in Ba'thist politics and continued his career as an air force pilot. During the United Arab Republic era, Asad's unit was transferred to Egypt, where he and other Ba'thist officers shared their resentment of party leaders Michel Aflaq and Salah al-Din al-Bitar for betraying the party when they agreed to its dissolution as a condition for creating the UAR. Asad and four other officers stationed in Cairo founded the Military Committee, which was dedicated to rebuilding the Ba'th and gaining power in Syria.

At the breakup of the UAR, Asad returned to Syria, but the new regime distrusted Ba'thists and removed him from the air force, assigning him to a desk job in the ministry of economy. For the next eighteen months, Asad and his colleagues on the Military Committee plotted a coup. An attempt in April 1962 failed, but the March 8, 1963 coup succeeded. In the new regime Asad was promoted from captain to lieutenant-colonel and appointed commander of an air base near Damascus. Later that year, he was elected to the party's Regional Command. His chief task, however, was to make the armed forces a bastion of the Ba'th Party. Asad purged the officer corps, promoted men loyal to the party, and invited Zaki al-Arsuzi to lecture on party ideals before the troops. When strife within the Military Committee surfaced in 1964, Asad sided with Salah al-Jadid, and he was rewarded with promotion to commander of the Syrian air force. After the February 23, 1966 coup, which brought the neo-Ba'th to power, Asad became minister of defense. In that capacity he helped organize Palestinian commando raids against Israel that triggered Israeli retaliations against Syrian

forces in the Golan Heights. From these skirmishes erupted the crisis of May 1967 that led to the June 1967 war, in which Syria lost the Golan Heights. Many blamed Asad for Syria's miserable military performance during the war, but he argued that it was the fault of policies pursued by dogmatic radicals in the neo-Ba'th. He further argued that the time had come for the regime to back away from its revolutionary program in order to concentrate the country's resources on the military confrontation with Israel. His comrade from the Military Committee and the regime's strongman, Salah alJadid, took the side of the radicals. Asad then consolidated his power base in the armed forces by getting rid of men loyal to Jadid. In February 1969, Asad dispatched units to take over the party newspapers and the national radio stations, and in so doing proved his mastery of the armed forces.

In September 1970, civil war broke out in Jordan between the government and Palestinian guerrillas. Asad sent Syrian armor into northern Jordan to support the Palestinians but withheld the air force, thereby making possible an effective Jordanian counterattack that drove out the Syrian tanks. At the end of October, Jadid made a bid to dismiss Asad, but in the trial of strength between the last two members of the Military Committee on the political scene, Asad easily prevailed. His men arrested his opponents, including Jadid, in a bloodless coup that Asad dubbed the corrective movement. At first he designated a Sunni, Ahmad al-Khatib, to serve as head of state, but in February 1971, Asad restored the presidency, which the neo-Ba'th had abolished, and occupied the office himself. This was a bold move because it was the first time that a non-Sunni was president of Syria.

On taking power Asad put Syria on a new course. He eased restraints on travel and trade, made overtures to the urban Sunni bourgeoisie by announcing plans to liberalize the economy, and reined in the security services. He further broadened the base of the regime in March 1972 when he formed the National Progressive Front, a coalition of political parties dominated by the Ba'th and included the Syrian Communist Party, the Arab Socialist Movement, the Socialist

Unity Party and the Arab Socialist Union. He also reshuffled the Ba'th Party's Regional Command, installing men loyal to him and assuming the position of secretary-general. For the most part, these moves gained popular backing for Asad from Syrians opposed to the neo-Ba'th's strict exclusion of other political forces and its dogmatic socialism. He also altered Syria's foreign policy, which under his predecessors' radicalism had isolated Syria in the Arab world. Asad mended relations with Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and other Arab countries. He was particularly eager to develop a close working relationship with Egyptian President Anwar Sadat in order to forge an Arab military capability to confront Israel. As for the superpowers, Asad cultivated a steady relationship with the Soviet Union because of Syria's dependence on Moscow for arms, while he continued the break in relations with the United States that had occurred following the June 1967 war.

Asad's priority was the retrieval of the Golan Heights and in pursuit of that end he and Sadat made secret plans for a surprise attack on Israel. In April 1973, the two leaders agreed on plans for the October 1973 war. A few weeks before the war, Syria restored relations with Jordan in a move to shore up Arab solidarity. Although the war resulted in additional territorial losses, the armed forces' initial success and ability to stop Israel's counterattack further bolstered Asad's standing in Syria. After the war American Secretary of State Henry Kissinger engaged in "shuttle diplomacy," traveling back and forth among Israel, Egypt, Syria, Moscow, and Washington. His first achievement was an agreement between Egypt and Israel to disengage their forces in Sinai in January 1974. Kissinger then managed to mediate a disengagement accord between Syria and Israel on the Golan front in May 1974. This accord stipulated the stationing of United Nations observers in a buffer zone between Syrian and Israeli forces. But that was as far as American mediation between Syria and Israel would go, and a new stalemate ensued, albeit stabilized by the buffer zone. When Sadat embarked on his solitary endeavor to reach peace with Israel, Asad's position became more vulnerable, but he was able to

convince the Soviet Union to assist his massive buildup of the armed forces and he gained access to the deep pockets of Arab Gulf states to pay for the military equipment.

In the mid-1970s Asad was preoccupied by the Lebanese Civil War, in which he ordered the Syrian army to intervene in June 1976. When Syrian troops fought against Palestinian and Lebanese Sunni forces, much of Syrian popular opinion was outraged and some believed that Asad was motivated by Alawi prejudice against Sunnis. This perception fueled smoldering resentment among Syrian Sunnis not reconciled to having an Alawi president. Conditions for unrest were augmented by deteriorating economic conditions in 1976 and 1977. Furthermore, morale among Syrian Islamists such as the Muslim Brothers shot up with the triumph of the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979. This combination of factors contributed to the uprising of Islamist and secular forces that threatened to topple the Asad regime from 1979 to 1982. The government weathered the storm by relying on fierce repression and strong support from the Ba'th Party's partisans. At the same time, the regime buttressed its standing among the large number of public sector employees by raising salaries in 1980. In order to take some steam out of urban middle-class frustrations, the regime also eased constraints on imports. The Islamist revolt peaked in the first week of February 1982 when the Muslim Brothers took over Hama and called on Syrian Muslims to rise up in the rest of the country. No other uprisings occurred and Asad sent army units and special forces to regain control of the city. In two weeks of fighting, between 5,000 and 20,000 people were killed. The suppression of the revolt in Hama marked the defeat of the Islamist revolt.

No sooner had Asad survived that strong challenge than Israel invaded Lebanon in June 1982, beginning the Lebanese War of 1982. Syria suffered initial reverses and had to endure the specter of Israeli domination over much of Lebanon, thereby posing a new threat to Syria. But by mobilizing Lebanese opposed to Israel and her Lebanese allies, Asad managed to turn the tables so that by the end of 1985 Israeli forces withdrew to a narrow strip of territory along the Israel-

Lebanon border. His achievement in Lebanon was made more difficult by his isolation in the Arab world because of his support for Iran against Iraq in the war that broke out between them in 1980.

Questions about Asad's durability arose in November 1983, when he disappeared from public view for several days, prompting rumors of serious illness and anxieties over the unsettled issue of succession. The specific nature of Asad's illness was never made public and when he reemerged he had to overcome a bid for power by his younger brother Rif'at alAsad. The president decisively won the showdown and forced Rif'at to spend most of the next several years abroad in the Soviet Union and France. By the late 1980s, Asad's regime was on a sounder footing than it had been since 1974, its worst problems stemming from a prolonged period of difficulty in the economy, in particular a shortage of foreign exchange. Beginning in 1986, the government took measures to reform the economy by encouraging a larger role for the private sector and these measures have succeeded in stimulating economic recovery.

When Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990, Asad decided to support the United States' initiative for defending Saudi Arabia against a possible Iraqi attack. Syria's participation in the anti-Iraq alliance paid handsome dividends: large cash payments from Saudi Arabia, a free hand to reconstitute Lebanon according to the Ta'if Accords, and better relations with Washington at a time when the Soviet Union was coming unraveled. After the war, the United States urged Syria to attend an international peace conference to resolve the ArabIsraeli dispute, and in July 1991 Asad agreed to send a delegation to the Madrid Conference. Bilateral negotiations between Syria and Israel from 1992 to 1995 failed to reach an agreement in which Syria would regain all of the Golan Heights and Israel would feel secure in a new era of normalized relations with its longtime adversary (see SYRIAN-ISRAELI PEACE TALKS). Nonetheless, the prospects for peace are better than ever before. On the domestic front, Asad has presided over substantial dilution of the Ba'th Party's power and socialist legacy, but the public

sector still plays a large role in the economy, and political activity remains closely controlled by the regime.

ASAD, RIF'AT AL- (1937-).

Younger brother of President Hafiz al-Asad and currently one of Syria's three vice presidents. Under his older brother's influence, Rif'at joined the Ba'th Party as a youth and entered the Military Academy at Homs. During the first Ba'thist regime, Rif'at took over command of a special armed unit charged with defending the Military Committee and its allies in the party. After Hafiz al-Asad seized power in November 1970, he enlarged Rif'at's armed force, named it the Defense Companies, and assigned it the task of protecting the regime against any internal enemies. By the late 1970s, Rif'at wielded considerable power as the president's brother and commander of the country's most powerful elite armed force. At its height, the Defense Companies numbered more than 50,000 men and had its own air, armor, and artillery units. As Rif'at became more influential, he also gained notoriety for leading an extravagant and debauched personal life, and thus turned into a magnet for animosity toward the regime.

Rif'at reached his greatest influence during the Islamist uprising spearheaded by the Muslim Brothers. He advocated ruthless repression as the answer to the guerrillas' armed struggle. His Defense Companies participated in the April 1980 suppression of dissent in Aleppo. After an assassination attempt against the president in June, Rif'at's men massacred several hundred Muslim Brothers held at a prison in Palmyra. The younger Asad, however, misplayed his hand when the president fell ill in November 1983. Rif'at took steps to seize control in the event of his brother's demise, and in doing so contradicted the president's express orders for the formation of a collective authority to govern in his absence. After the president recovered in late November, he took several steps to break Rif'at's power, including the transfer of command over the Defense Companies. The president also designated three vice presidents, including Rif'at, who correctly figured that the appointment actually meant demotion to a purely titular role. The younger Asad responded at the end of March 1984 with

a bold bid to take over the regime, but the president made him climb down by sheer force of his personality. Two months later Hafiz al-Asad sent Rif'at to Moscow on a "diplomatic" mission that ended in a prolonged exile to first Switzerland, then France. In his absence, the president defanged the Defense Companies and reassigned some of its men to other units. Asad then allowed Rif'at to return in November, still one of three vice presidents but unable to rebuild his power base.

ASALI, SABRI AL- (1903-).

Three-time prime minister of Syria in the 1950s. His political activism dated to his participation in the Great Revolt of 1925-1927 for which the French Mandate authorities exiled him. In Cairo he joined the Syrian-Palestine Congress and developed a close association with Shukri al-Quwwatli. He returned to Syria in 1928 and opened a law practice in Damascus. In 1935 Asali became the head of the League of National Action, but the following year the League expelled him for joining the National Bloc. As a member of the Bloc and its successor the National Party, Asali won parliamentary seats in 1936, 1943, and 1947. In the early independence era he served in several cabinets.

Following Husni al-Za'im's March 1949 coup and National Party leader Shukri al-Quwwatli's flight to Egypt, Asali took over the party's leadership. He achieved his greatest influence from 1954 to 1958 when he was prime minister a number of times. From 1 March until 11 June 1954, he headed a pro-western cabinet inclined to pursue unity with Iraq. A few days before his fall he secretly met with an Iraqi representative to discuss ways to implement the Fertile Crescent Plan. Asali again assumed the office on 13 February 1955, this time with the support of neutralist forces opposed to Syria's adherence to the Baghdad Pact, and he aligned the country with Egypt and Saudi Arabia, but this government fell in September. Asali would become prime minister one last time in June 1956, when he headed a cabinet that allotted two key portfolios (Foreign Relations and Economy) to the Ba'th Party. It was this government that

negotiated Syria's merger with Egypt in the United Arab Republic. Asali became a vice president in the UAR but Nasir made him resign in October 1958. In March 1963, Asali was one of several prominent politicians whom the Ba'thist regime formally stripped of their civil rights.

ASHRAF.

Hereditary body in Muslim societies that claims descent from the Prophet Muhammad. In Syrian history, the ashraf of Aleppo became organized as a distinct political-military body in the eighteenth century and contended for power with the janissaries stationed in the city. Conflict was particularly sharp during the last three decades of the century, until a janissary massacre of ashraf in 1798.

ASSASSIN. See NIZARI.

ASSYRIAN.

Nestorian Christians who speak a dialect of Syriac, they were once widely spread throughout the Middle East, but in the early twentieth century they mostly lived in eastern Turkey, northern Iraq, and northwestern Iran near Lake Urmiah. During World War I, they enlisted Russian support in a revolt against the Ottomans, but were defeated and forced to flee into Iran. The British then sent 25,000 Assyrians gathered at Hamadan in western Iran to a refugee camp near Baghdad. They desired to be repatriated to their ancestral home inside Turkey, but the new Turkish government refused to admit them and the British encouraged them to settle in Iraq. These non-Arab Christians wanted to retain their autonomy and distrusted the Iraqi authorities, who in turn regarded them with suspicion, in large part for their willingness to form a special military force under British command. When Iraq became independent in 1930, the government decommissioned the Assyrian "Levies," but strains persisted between the authorities and the Assyrians. In June 1933 a skirmish between Assyrians and the Iraqi army sparked an army massacre of several hundred Assyrians. Panic spread and 9,000 Assyrians fled into Syria, where they settled along the Khabur River in Jazira province. For eight

years the League of Nations operated a special administration to assist their settlement and economic integration.

ATABEGS.

In general, the term refers to dignitaries in the Saljuk regime. In the Syrian context, the atabegs were military slaves, or mamluks, who acted as the regents of the Saljuk princes of Damascus and Aleppo. In 1104, Duqaq, the last Saljuk prince of Damascus, died, and the atabeg Tughtagin ruled in his own right. Upon his death in 1128 power passed to his son Buri, and the Burid line lasted until 1154 and the Zangid conquest of Damascus by Nur al-Din Mahmud, himself from a line of northern Syrian atabegs. The Burid atabegs governed Damascus and its environs, a small territory squeezed between the Fatimids in Egypt, the Franks of the first Crusade, and their most dangerous enemies, the Zangid atabegs of northern Syria. The last Saljuk prince of Aleppo died in 1113, and there followed fifteen years of struggle for control of Aleppo among Muslim and Crusader powers. This struggle concluded in 1128 with the entry of the atabeg Imad al-Din al-Zangi, who had already established his rule over Mosul in northern Iraq. He and his successors, known as the Zangids, were often involved in warfare against the Crusaders.

ATASI, HASHIM AL- (1876-1960).

Born in Homs, prime minister under Amir Faysal in 1920, a founding member and first chief of the National Bloc, he was one of the foremost nationalist politicians during the French Mandate. He was chief of the Syrian delegation to Paris that negotiated the Franco-Syrian Treaty of 1936, and then became president of Syria during the National Bloc government of 1936-1939. In the early independence period Atasi was a founding member of the northern-oriented People's Party and prime minister under Sami al-Hinnawi's short-lived regime. Atasi later became president under Adib al-Shishakli's first regime, but he resigned after Shishakli's November 1951 military coup and dissolution of parliament. He then emerged as a central figure in the movement that overthrew Shishakli in February 1954. At the age of seventy-eight, Atasi became president following Shishakli's removal, but he resigned in September 1955.

ATASI, NUR AL-DIN AL- (c. 1929-1992).

Medical doctor and member of the radical neo-Ba'th. In the first Ba'thist regime, Atasi was a member of the National Revolutionary Command Council, minister of the interior, and then deputy prime minister. In the neo-Ba'thist regime, this Sunni from a respected Homs family was head of state, but he sided with Salah al-Jadid against Hafiz al-Asad in the internecine struggle for supremacy. When Asad's faction of the party prevailed in November 1970, Atasi was thrown into prison. He was released in August 1992 because of poor health, and he died a few months later in Paris.

ATRASH, SULTAN AL- (1887-1982).

Druze leader of the Great Revolt of 1925-1927 against the French Mandate and member of the foremost clan in Jabal Druze. At the beginning of the mandate, the French tried to cooperate with the Atrash chiefs, but Sultan al-Atrash sought to minimize the France's authority in Jabal Druze. From 1922 to 1923, he led an uprising against the French, but was forced to flee to Transjordan. Two years later, however, he was back in Syria and planned a better organized, more widespread revolt. In July 1925, he launched an uprising that expelled the French from Jabal Druze and then spread to the rest of Syria. When the French crushed the revolt two years later, Sultan al-Atrash fled first to Transjordan and then Arabia. While in Transjordan, Atrash developed links with its Hashemite ruler Amir Abdallah and sustained them for many years after his return to Syria. Atrash returned from his exile at Kerak in May 1937. His ties with Abdallah were part of a more general connection between the Hashemites and the Druzes for the next two decades. During the early independence period, Atrash was prominent in the affairs of Jabal Druze, although his clan's power declined.

ATTAR, ISAM AL-.

A Damascus high school teacher who became leader of the Syrian Muslim Brothers from 1957 until his exile in 1963. Attar was not known as a religious leader, but he was close to the organization's first leader, Mustafa al-Siba'i, and was married to the daughter of a prominent

shaykh. Shortly after becoming leader, the Brothers were banned under the United Arab Republic because of Egyptian President Gamal Abd al-Nasir's hostility to the movement, which had violently opposed him in Egypt during the 1950s. The Muslim Brothers reemerged following Syria's secession from the UAR and won ten seats in the December 1961 elections to parliament. Attar was one of the Brothers' candidates to gain a seat. But when the Ba'th Party came to power in 1963, the Brothers again faced a hostile regime. Attar's public sermons against the Ba'th's secularism led the regime to briefly imprison him. By the end of 1963 he was forced into exile. His application to reenter Syria was turned down, so he spent the next few years in Lebanon until his expulsion in 1966. Meanwhile, the Ba'thists banned the Muslim Brothers. In 1968 Attar went to West Germany to direct an Islamic Center and publish an Islamic periodical. Attar represented the Brothers' moderate wing, which opposed armed struggle against the government. In 1970 he had to relinquish his leadership to more militant elements determined to pursue a violent strategy in a bid to overthrow the government, but his voice continued to matter in Syrian Islamist circles. In the middle of 1980, his journal came around to supporting the armed struggle against the Ba'thist regime. In retaliation, agents of the Syrian government murdered Attar's wife in Germany in March 1981.

AYN JALUT, BATTLE OF.

On 3 September 1260, Mamluk and Mongol forces met in one of the major battles of Muslim history at this site, where according to legend David slew Goliath. The Mamluk Sultan Qutuz led his troops from Egypt to meet the advancing Mongols, who had swept south through Syria, brushing aside the feeble Ayyubid princes of central Syria. The Mamluk sultan and the chief commander of the vanguard, Baybars, gathered a much larger force than the Mongols had mustered and inflicted a decisive defeat on the Central Asian invaders, the first such military setback in more than four decades of Mongol assaults on Muslim armies. The outcome of the battle ended the immediate Mongol threat to

Egypt and marked the beginning of the Mamluks' rise to power over Syria.

AYYUBID DYNASTY.

The Kurdish clansmen of Najm al-Din Ayyub rose to prominence through service to the Zangid rulers of Mosul and Aleppo. One of Najm al-Din's kinsmen, Saladin, established dynastic rule over Egypt in 1171, and over most of Syria by 1183. His successors divided their empire into autonomous hereditary principalities centered in Aleppo, Damascus, Hama, and Homs while the main branch of the dynasty ruled Egypt. During their ninety-year rule, the Ayyubids fought each other as often as they fought the Crusader states, with which they often negotiated truces. Their tolerance toward the Franks led them to allow the first Italian merchants to establish themselves in Damascus. The last Ayyubid ruler of Egypt, al-Salih Ayyub, relied on military slaves, or mamluks, to an unprecedented degree. The ethnic homogeneity of his mamluks and their isolation from Egyptian society contributed to their determination to seize power in 1250, an event that led to the establishment of the Mamluk sultanate. Ten years later, the Mongol invasion crushed the remaining Ayyubid domains in Syria.

AZM.

The most prominent political family in Syria during the eighteenth century. Isma'il Pasha al-Azm (d. 1730) launched his clan's fortunes when the Ottomans appointed him governor of central Syrian districts, then of Tripoli, and in 1725 of Damascus. During his tenure, janissary factions created troubles in the city. He promoted the careers of his brother Sulayman and son Ibrahim as governors of Tripoli and Sidon. Isma'il fell from favor in Istanbul in 1730 and was exiled to Crete. Sulayman Pasha (d. 1743) served as governor of Tripoli, then of Damascus from 1733 to 1738 and 1741 to 1743. He was no more effective than his brother Isma'il in quelling janissary unruliness. At his death, his nephew As'ad (d. 1758) became the next Azm governor of Damascus and served for an unusually long time (1743-1757). His long tenure can be attributed to his crushing of the local janissaries in 1746. This enabled him to establish his unchallenged

authority over the city. He used some of his family's vast wealth to construct a splendid monument to eighteenth-century Ottoman Arab architecture and art, the Azm Palace. As'ad al-Azm was also known for relaxing restraints on Christians; for instance, he allowed them to drink alcohol in public. His rule represented the apex of Azm influence in Syria, as other members of the clan governed Sidon, Tripoli, Aleppo, and even Mosul. As'ad Pasha himself ultimately fell from grace with Ottoman officials, was forced to give up his post, and was executed in 1758.

For the next thirteen years it appeared the era of Azm prominence had ended, but in 1771 the Ottomans appointed Isma'il's grandson, Muhammad al-Azm (d. 1783), governor of Damascus. During his first tenure, the governor of southern Syria, Zahir al-Umar, built up his power at the expense of the province of Damascus. The Ottomans dismissed Muhammad Pasha for failing to cope with Zahir and his Egyptian ally, the mamluk Ali Bey, but Azm returned to the post the following year. For the remainder of his second tenure (which ended when he died), Muhammad Pasha witnessed the fall of Zahir al-Umar and the rise of Ahmad Pasha al-Jazzar. He did, however, generously support urban construction and patronized religious and literary activities. The last member of the clan to govern Damascus was Abdallah Pasha. He held office three times between 1790 and 1808. He also served as governor of Tripoli and of Aleppo. During his time, Syria was threatened by Wahhabi raids from Arabia and a French invasion led by Napoleon Bonaparte. While the Ottomans did not appoint any more members of the Azm clan to govern Damascus, the clan remained one of the country's wealthiest and most influential families well into the twentieth century.

AZM, HAQQI AL- (1864-1955).

First prime minister of an elected Syrian government in 1932 until the French dismissed him in 1934. In the late Ottoman era he held posts in the civil service, but then became active in Arab nationalist politics and joined the Ottoman Party for Administrative Decentralization that formed in 1912. At the start of the

French Mandate, Azm decided to cooperate with the new rulers of Syria, and in November 1920, the French appointed him governor of the Damascus state, which they had created to administer southern Syria. He turned the office into a nest of nepotism and corruption, which scandalized Damascene public opinion. His inability to garner support from any quarter but his extended family led the French to force him to resign in January 1923. Azm later formed the Reform Party to contest the elections of December 1931 to January 1932 and he gained a seat from Damascus. In June 1932, he became prime minister and signed France's first proposal for a Franco-Syrian Treaty in November 1933. Nationalist opposition to the treaty stemmed from its provision that the Druze and Alawi regions would remain separate from the rest of Syria. Azm's inability to deliver support for the treaty led the French High Commissioner to dismiss him in March 1934.

AZM, KHALID AL- (1895-1965).

A leading independent politician from the late 1940s until the early 1960s, and known as the "Red Pasha" for his alliance with the Syrian Communist Party and support for better relations with the Soviet Union. Azm became prime minister to resolve a parliamentary crisis in December 1948, following Syria's defeat in the Palestine War of 1948. He was deposed by the March 1949 coup d'etat of Husni al-Za'im, but after Sami al-Hinnawi's military coup in August he became finance minister. In December 1949, after Adib al-Shishakli seized power, he named Azm prime minister, but his government fell after just five months because of feuding among cabinet members and disruption by Akram al-Hawrani. He returned as prime minister yet again in March 1951, this time with Hawrani's support as well as that of the National Party and the army. The common denominator was opposition to the People's Party, which held a plurality in the national assembly. Once again Azm's tenure was brief as his government was brought down when the People's Party inspired demonstrations at the end of July. Azm won renewed influence in the 1955 cabinet of Sabri al-Asali as its neutralist foreign minister. In this capacity Azm cultivated good relations with the Soviet Union

to fend off western pressures exercised through Iraq and Turkey. His good relations with the Soviets were mirrored in Syrian politics by his close ties to Khalid Bakdash, the leader of the SCP.

After Syria's secession from the United Arab Republic, Azm returned as prime minister again in September 1962 with a platform to restore democratic liberties that had been suspended under the UAR. In December he rescinded emergency laws and promised multiparty elections. This threat to end the army's role in politics generated a new round of plotting by several cliques of army officers, leading to the March 8, 1963 coup that overthrew the Azm government. He then departed Syria and spent his remaining years in Lebanon.

AZMA, BASHIR AL- (1910-).

Prime minister of the cabinet that formed after the 28 March 1962 military coup against a conservative civilian government. Azma was an independent politician who had been head of the Syrian Doctors' Association. His government moved to heal Syrian relations with Egypt, which had soured because of Syria's secession from the United Arab Republic. Nonetheless, Egypt continued to criticize the Syrian government and at the end of July the Syrians announced the discovery of a Nasirist plot to seize power. The Azma government also faced strong pressures to restore democratic liberties, and it allowed the National Assembly to reconvene on 14 September and vote for a new government under Khalid al-Azm. Azma then became deputy prime minister, a position he held until the March 8, 1963 coup.

B

BAGHDAD PACT.

Great Britain was the moving force behind this pro-western military alliance formed by Iraq and Turkey on 24 February 1955. Much of the following year's regional politics focused on the struggle to include Syria in the pact or to keep her out of it. Egypt and Saudi Arabia supported Syrian parties and politicians who favored nonalignment. In

Syrian politics this episode was eventful in generating a coalition among hitherto rival groups, especially the Ba'th Party and the Syrian Communist Party, and between the Ba'th and Egypt, which supported the former's determination to prevent Syria from joining the Baghdad Pact. In early March 1955, a Syrian-Egyptian-Saudi Arabian alliance was proposed as an alternative security arrangement (it remained a diplomatic, not a military fact), effectively scuttling the prospect of Syrian participation in the British plan. Britain nonetheless adhered to the Baghdad Pact in April. The episode marked Syria's refusal to take sides in the Cold War by following a neutralist line. In the next three years, Syria's neutralism strained its relations with Great Britain and the United States. Both powers increased pressures on the Syrian government. As a result, the Syrians improved relations with the Soviet Union, which offered economic, military, and political support.

BAKDASH, KHALID (1912-1995).

Born in Damascus, he is the durable leader of the Syrian Communist Party. Bakdash joined the party in 1930 while a student at the Damascus School of Law, where he met some Armenian communists. His Kurdish background attracted many young educated Kurds to the party. The French imprisoned Bakdash for his political activities in 1931 for several months and arrested him again in 1933, but he escaped and traveled to the Soviet Union. About this time he produced the first Arabic translation of *The Communist Manifesto*. In the USSR, he studied at the Communist University of the Toilers of the East until 1936, when he returned to Syria and became secretarygeneral of the SCP. The same year, Bakdash went to Paris to assist the Syrian delegation negotiating the Franco-Syrian Treaty. He was instrumental in obtaining the French Communist Party's support for the Syrians. He then directed the party to support the National Bloc's demands for independence. During World War II Bakdash steered the SCP on a strictly nationalist line, delaying the class struggle until independence could be attained.

In the independence era, Bakdash defined the party's platform as opposition to imperialism, support for civil liberties and helping the poor. He reached the peak of his influence between 1954 and 1958, when he forged a common front with the independent politician Khalid al-Azm and Ba'thist leader Akram al-Hawrani. In 1954, Bakdash won a seat in parliament, the first communist to be elected in an Arab country. He then benefited from Syria's turn to the Soviet Union for support against western pressures to join an anti-communist alliance. But when Syria and Egypt formed the United Arab Republic in 1958, he concluded that the virulently anti-communist Egyptian president Gamal Abd alNasir would suppress the SCP, and he went into exile in eastern Europe. Bakdash spent most of the next eight years in Prague, then in 1966 the neo-Ba'th regime invited him to return. When the regime of Hafiz al-Asad came to power, the SCP was included in the National Progressive Front, a coalition of leftist parties headed by the Ba'th Party, but Bakdash's movements have been closely circumscribed.

BAKRI, NASIB AL- (1888-1966).

Damascus nationalist leader, active in al-Fatat during the Ottoman era and a participant in the Arab Revolt. His chief task in the revolt was to organize a Druze rising against the Ottomans, and in the course of his activities he developed a close association with Druze leader Sultan al-Atrash. In Amir Faysal's 1918-1920 government, Bakri was rewarded for his efforts against the Ottomans with a high post. During the French Mandate era he played a crucial role in the Great Revolt of 1925-1927 as a link between Damascus-based nationalists of the People's Party and Druze leaders. When the French suppressed the revolt, he was forced into exile. He returned to Syria in 1928 and four years later resumed his nationalist activities by joining the National Bloc in return for its support for his election to parliament. In the factional politics of the Bloc, Bakri lined up with the moderate leader Jamil Mardam. When Mardam became prime minister in 1936, he appointed Bakri governor of Jabal Druze because of his extensive experience in the region. Yet the appointment of a non-Druze rankled the

Druze, especially those who opposed the incorporation of their region with the rest of Syria (from 1922 to 1936 Jabal Druze had administrative autonomy). To appease Druze sentiment, Prime Minister Mardam agreed to limit Bakri's tenure to six months. In 1938 Bakri left the Bloc, even though he was its vice president at the time, and switched over to its rival Abd al-Rahman Shahbandar. In the independence era, Bakri belonged to the second People's Party and was elected to parliament in 1949.

BARADA RIVER.

Known in the Bible as the Abana, the Barada River rises from springs in the Anti-Lebanon mountains and runs eastward until it descends to the plain of Damascus, which depends on its waters for urban and agricultural use. Quite simply, without this river there would be no Damascus. Since ancient times, the Nabataeans, Aramaeans, Romans, and Umayyads have dug channels to distribute the river's waters over a broad area. By Roman times, six branches of the Barada had been artificially created to bring water to Damascus for use in public baths, fountains, and houses. After passing through Damascus, the branches extend into the surrounding Ghuta oasis, which is irrigated by them. Beyond the Ghuta, the river terminates in a marshy area east of Damascus.

BA'TH PARTY.

Ba 'th means "rebirth" or "renaissance." The party's full name from 1947 to 1953 was the Arab Renaissance Party; in 1953, it was renamed the Arab Socialist Renaissance Party. It was formally established by Michel Aflaq and Salah al-Din al-Bitar in 1947, and went on to become the most influential political party in Arab politics during the 1950s and 1960s, and the ruling party in Syria since 1963. Its platform stresses Arab unity, freedom, and socialism.

Early history. The cofounders were teachers at a secondary school in Damascus in the 1930s, when Syria was still under the French Mandate. In the early 1940s, Aflaq and Bitar resigned their teaching posts to pursue their political aspirations. Even before formally constituting the movement as a party, it attracted a following among their pupils, many

of whom went on to become teachers who would in turn recruit their own pupils to the movement. The founding congress of the Ba'th Party was held in Damascus on 4-6 April 1947. True to its pan-Arab ideology, the congress attracted members from Iraq, Jordan, and Lebanon as well as various parts of Syria. Michel Aflaq was elected secretary-general of the party, a title he would retain as its chief ideologue until 1965.

Ideology. The Ba'th Party's ideology is encapsulated in its slogan, "Unity, Freedom, and Socialism. One Arab nation with an eternal mission." For Aflaq and Bitar, Arab nationalism was the underlying idea for all three elements of the slogan. They wanted to overcome the division of the Arab world into many states and to achieve the unity of the Arab nation. Freedom for the various Arab countries under European rule and domination would be necessary to bring about unity. Then the united Arab nation would have to conquer its internal enemies, namely feudal and reactionary institutions, to clear the way for the establishment of a just social order. The socialist element in Ba'thist ideology would remain secondary until the 1960s and the rise of a new generation of party activists opposed to Aflaq and Bitar.

Structure. The Second National Congress held in June 1954 formally defined the party's organizational structure to consist of a hierarchy of six units. The basic unit is the circle comprising between three and seven members. Above the circle is the division, which is made of three to seven circles. Two or more divisions comprise a section, the leadership of which is a congress that elects a section command. Above the section is a branch composed of two or more sections and usually encompassing a city or province. The second highest unit is a region, which corresponds to an Arab country, so that Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, and Jordan would each have a regional congress and a regional command. The highest unit is the national command, which oversees party activity in the various countries in which it is active.

History. The party entered the national political stage in 1949 when it won a single seat in national parliamentary elections. Under Husni al-Za'im, the Ba'th was suppressed along with

other political parties. During the brief dictatorship of Sami al-Hinnawi, Aflaq served as minister of education. When Adib al-Shishakli seized power at the end of 1949, the party hoped Syria's new ruler would give it space to win new support, but by 1952 Shishakli was clearly unwilling to countenance organized political activity outside his control. Consequently, the Ba'th's leaders joined with the National Party, the People's Party, and the Syrian Communist Party in 1953 to find a way to bring down the regime. Around the same time, Aflaq and Bitar joined forces with Akram al-Hawrani's Arab Socialist Party to form the Arab Socialist Renaissance Party. After Shishakli's overthrow, the Ba'th won twenty-two seats in the national parliamentary elections of September 1954, in large measure because of the popular base Hawrani added to the party with his following in Jabal Druze, Hama, and the army. Hawrani, Bitar, and Wahib al-Ghanim all won seats. The Ba'th continued to grow in influence and it established close ties with Egypt during the struggle against Syria's adherence to the Baghdad Pact. From 1955 to 1956, Hawrani and his faction formed a tactical alliance with the SCP to oppose pro-western political forces seeking union with Iraq or alignment with the US. Aflaq and Bitar, however, became alarmed at the SCP's increasing popularity, which it owed in part to the growth of military and economic support from communist countries. In June 1956, the Ba'th gained the foreign relations portfolio for Bitar. In late 1957 and early 1958 the party played a key role in the political developments that led to union with Egypt.

When the United Arab Republic formed in February 1958, the Ba'th leadership was optimistic regarding the opportunity the union would present them to dominate Syrian affairs even though Gamal Abd al-Nasir insisted on the party's dissolution as a condition for forming the union. But Nasir's handling of the July 1959 elections to a National Union, wherein he obstructed Ba'th members from getting elected, alienated party leaders from the union experiment. At the end of the year, the UAR's Ba'thist ministers resigned from the government. Because the party voluntarily dissolved itself at the outset of the union, the Syrian Ba'th entered a period of

disarray that permanently weakened the party's original leadership. Moreover, younger party members blamed Aflaq, Bitar, and Hawrani for leading Syria into the union, which had been a disaster for the party. Some of these critics secretly continued party activities and kept its structures in tact in a number of towns. When Syria seceded from the UAR in September 1961, the reconstituted Ba'th was dominated by younger men referred to as "regionalists" for their greater interest in pursuing socialism at home than unity with other Arab countries. Another development that weakened the old leadership was the emergence of the secret Military Committee as a powerful organization. In 1962, it was evident that Aflaq's star had dimmed in the Ba'thist firmament and that Bitar no longer enjoyed the respect of the rank and file. Hawrani, moreover, left the party and revived his own Arab Socialist Party.

Eighteen months after the failure of the UAR, a coalition of Ba'thist, Nasirist, and independent officers seized power in the March 8, 1963 coup. Strong sentiment for Nasir in the army and society at large, however, meant that the Ba'th's position was not yet secure. So in April, the Military Committee ordered a purge of Nasirists from the army. Then pro-Nasir riots broke out in Damascus and Aleppo, which the regime harshly suppressed and followed with further purges of Nasirists from the bureaucracy. The decisive moment in the Ba'thist-Nasirist struggle occurred on 18 July 1963, when a Nasirist uprising of officers and civilians in Damascus was bloodily repressed by Ba'thist forces. These events further poisoned relations between Egypt and Syria.

Meanwhile, the party's internal divisions became more severe. On the one hand, the original leadership of Michel Aflaq and Salah al-Din al-Bitar gave priority to Arab unity. They were opposed, however, by younger members who tended to come from the provinces and favored rapid implementation of the party's socialist platform. The younger Ba'thists, later dubbed the neo-Ba'th, eventually sided with the Military Committee against the Aflaq-Bitar wing of the party. The radical faction took control of the Regional

Command in September 1963 when it excluded Aflaq from its membership.

In addition to strife within the party, the regime faced strong opposition from conservative social forces. Preachers in mosques began to condemn the Ba'th for its socialism and secularism. In early 1964 violent clashes erupted in Aleppo, Hama, and Homs. In Hama an anti-government rising broke out in April under the slogan "Islam or the Ba'th," and the Muslim Brothers organized armed attacks on government and party officials. In retaliation, the regime sent tanks into the city and shelled it into submission. To quell the general unrest, General Amin al-Hafiz issued a new constitution under which he became president and Bitar the prime minister. But in October, Hafiz dismissed Bitar, assumed the office of prime minister himself, and appointed members of the Ba'thist left to the cabinet. The regime then embarked on a more radical phase of economic reforms. In December 1964, it banned all oil concessions, effectively nationalizing the Syrian oil industry, and on 1 January 1965 it enacted sweeping nationalization measures aimed at industry, including electricity, cotton ginning, and most foreign trade. The Regional Command, dominated by the Military Committee and the regionalists, then concentrated power in its hands in March 1965 when it assumed full powers and designated its secretary-general as head of state. Two months later, Aflaq was ousted as secretary-general of the National Command. Aflaq and Bitar tried to reassert their leadership in November, but could not dislodge their rivals from the Regional Command. In February 1966, the remaining representatives of the old guard in the National Command fired the members of the Regional Command and dismissed members of the Military Committee from the National Revolutionary Command Council. Then in the February 23, 1966 coup the regionalists and the Military Committee took the decisive steps to remove their rivals, thus permanently dividing the party between the old guard (whose supporters would come to power in Iraq two years later) and the neo-Ba'th. Ever since, relations between the two wings of the formerly single party have been marked

by venomous propaganda and subversion. The party founders, Aflaq and Bitar, fled to Beirut.

During the period of neo-Ba'thist rule, 1966 to 1970, the party evolved distinct civilian and military wings loyal to Salah al-Jadid and Hafiz al-Asad, respectively. After the June 1967 war, tensions mounted between the two wings over domestic and foreign policy, and in November 1970 Asad overthrew the civilian branch in the corrective movement. The Asad regime initially took steps to broaden its base beyond the Ba'th party, but during the Islamic insurgency of 1978 to 1982 fell back on the party for support. After that brief revival of party influence, it has again declined in importance as a component of the regime. The parliament elected in 1990 had a larger proportion of independent deputies while shrinking the Ba'thist majority. Moreover, a party congress has not been held since 1985. Given the regime's policy of gradual economic opening, which has given room for the private sector to substantially increase its share in the national economy, it appears that Ba'thist socialism is in retreat and the party itself in decline.

BAYBARS, SULTAN (1223-1277).

The second Mamluk ruler and the founder of the Mamluk sultanate's authority over Syria. He first appeared as a dependent of a late Ayyubid sultan, and he was probably behind the murder of the last Ayyubid ruler in 1250. A decade later, after playing an important part in the Mamluk defeat of the Mongols at the battle of Ayn Jalut, he plotted and partook in the assassination of the first Mamluk sultan, Qutuz, in order to seize power. He then made thorough preparations for warfare in Syria against the Crusader states and the Mongols. Between 1260 and 1265, Baybars eliminated and absorbed the remaining Ayyubid principalities scattered throughout Syria. He then launched a six-year war against the Crusaders' strongholds, beginning in Palestine, moving north to Antioch, and finally taking Safita and Hisn al-Akrad. When Sultan Baybars died in Damascus in 1277, he had set the Mamluk sultanate on a firm military foundation and reunified most of Syria under a single authority that would last until the Ottoman conquest in 1516. His

mausoleum in al-Zahiriyya madrasa became the site of Syria's first national library in 1879.

BEDOUIN.

Throughout the history of Syria, the countryside of the interior has been strongly influenced, and at times completely dominated, by bedouin, pastoral nomads belonging to various tribes. The bedouins' livelihood depended on pasturing their sheep and camel herds. The pursuit of grazing lands determined the pattern of annual migration between winter domains in the desert of the east and south and summer pastures closer to and sometimes in the western and northern regions of rain-fed agriculture. At times of drought or government weakness, the bedouin completely took over lands that were marginally suited to cultivation. Alternatively, the zone of cultivation pushed eastward during periods of strong sedentary authority. The bedouin occupied a special niche in Syrian trade for centuries. They exchanged the products of their livestock (wool, hides, meat, and dairy products) for grain and manufactures; and they provided the animals that transported goods in overland trade.

In modern times the Ottoman Empire took measures to contain the bedouin during the second half of the nineteenth century in the Tanzimat era. The Ottomans stationed larger and better-equipped military forces; built permanent garrisons and government offices at such strategic points along the Euphrates River as Raqqa and Dayr al-Zur; induced cultivators to colonize deserted villages; and enticed bedouin shaykhs to cooperate by giving them property rights to tribal lands. By the early twentieth century, the balance of power had shifted against the bedouin, and relations within tribes altered. The shaykhs were becoming landlords over immigrant sharecroppers from other parts of Syria and fellow tribesmen who had given up pastoral nomadism.

The bedouins' numbers have declined in the twentieth century as they increasingly became sedentary. In 1930, the bedouin numbered 360,000, or nearly 13 percent of the total population. Thirty years later, their numbers had dwindled to just over 210,000, or 5 percent of the total population. Most tribesmen have left the pastoral economy for agriculture; some

have migrated to towns and cities to work in construction and transport; a small portion still raise livestock, but no longer follow the old migratory patterns, preferring instead to use trucks to transport their animals and to bring them food and water.

BITAR, SALAH AL-DIN (1912-1980).

Cofounder of the Ba'th Party along with Michel Aflaq. Bitar was a Sunni Muslim from Damascus. He studied political science at the Sorbonne in Paris, then returned to Damascus to teach high school. In cooperating with Aflaq, Bitar actively engaged in politics, while Aflaq played the role of party ideologue and writer. From 1947 to 1954, Bitar was on the Ba'th Party's executive committee, and when the party reorganized its structure, he became a member of its National Command. In 1954, he gained a seat in parliament after two earlier unsuccessful attempts. He became foreign minister in 1956 and used that office to campaign for the Ba'th Party's platform of Arab unity. In early 1958, Bitar headed a government committee to push forward efforts for union with Egypt. When the United Arab Republic was formed, he served on its cabinets until the end of 1959, when his disillusionment with the union experiment led him to resign from office. As a condition of joining the UAR regime, he had already withdrawn from the Ba'th Party's National Command. By 1960, Bitar was strongly opposed to the union with Egypt that he had so vigorously pursued, and when Syria seceded in September 1961, he publicly lauded the act.

At the beginning of the first Ba'thist regime in March 1963, Bitar served as prime minister a number of times, but he was pushed aside when more radical factions of the party rose to dominance. Following the February 23, 1966 coup, the neo-Ba'th leaders imprisoned Bitar, but in August he escaped and fled across the border to Lebanon. When the Lebanese Civil War erupted in 1975, Bitar moved to France, where he remained active in publishing and commenting on Arab affairs. In particular, he expressed his regret at the failure of his and Aflaq's political enterprise. The regime of

Hafiz al-Asad suspected Bitar of plotting against it, and on 21 July 1980, he was assassinated in Paris.

BIZRI, AFIF AL-

First rose to prominence as head of the courtmartial that tried officers implicated in the conspiracy of 1956 orchestrated by Iraq and Great Britain. The following year he joined forces with Abd al-Hamid al-Sarraj to form a revolutionary command council, an extragovernmental body under leftist officers that would dominate Syria's foreign relations. In August 1957 Major-General Bizri, by then wellknown for his sympathies with the Syrian Communist Party, became chief of staff as part of a leftist purge of pro-western officers. He played a leading role in pushing for the union with Egypt, which created the United Arab Republic in February 1958, but Egyptian President Gamal Abd al-Nasir dismissed him just one month after the union for objecting to purges of the Syrian officer corps.

In June 1959 Bizri left Syria and settled in Beirut. He issued a public manifesto criticizing Egyptian domination of the UAR and calling for the restoration of political liberties. He favored retaining the union but modifying its form by moving to a federal system in which Syria and Egypt would each have separate parliaments while continuing to handle defense and foreign relations under a central government. Nasir interpreted Bizri's statement as a summons to agitation by communists in Syria, so he ordered a crackdown on the SCP.

BLUDAN CONFERENCE.

In September 1937, Arab nationalists from several countries met to express broad support for the Palestinians' revolt against Zionism and the British Mandate in general, and against Britain's recent proposal to partition Palestine into Jewish and Arab states. The Bludan Conference is historically noteworthy as an early demonstration of pan-Arab concern over Palestine.

BONAPARTE, NAPOLEON (1769-1821).

Napoleon's relevance to Syrian history stems from the French invasion of Egypt that he led in July 1798. To secure his position there he led an

invasion of Syria in February 1799. His 13,000-man army overcame Ottoman garrisons at al-Arish in the Sinai Peninsula and at Gaza in southern Palestine. In March, the French invasion proceeded toward Acre, the well-fortified stronghold of Ahmad Pasha alJazzar. Napoleon intended a land and marine blockade to besiege Acre, but a squadron of Ottoman and British ships intercepted French naval forces off the coast of Acre and drove them off. Meanwhile Ahmad al-Jazzar prepared Acre to withstand a siege, and England assisted him by providing military supplies. The siege began in the middle of March. Ottoman forces tenaciously defended the town, while the governor of Damascus dispatched forces to attack the French from the rear, but the French repulsed them near Nazareth. The siege dragged on for two months and Napoleon was losing troops to bubonic plague, so on 20 May he broke the siege and began a retreat to Egypt. Altogether, some 2,000 French soldiers perished during the siege, half of them from the plague.

BYZANTINE EMPIRE.

In 324 the Roman emperor Constantine moved the imperial court from Rome to Byzantium, the site of present-day Istanbul in Turkey, known for centuries after the emperor as Constantinople. Also known as the Eastern Roman Empire, the Byzantine Empire represented a continuation of Roman rule over Syria and lasted until the Arab conquest in the 630s. Thereafter, the Byzantine Empire remained the nemesis of Muslim Syria until the twelfth century and the era of the Crusades. In Umayyad and early Abbasid times, Muslim armies launched annual raids against the Byzantines along the Syrian-Asia Minor front. The Umayyads made a number of unsuccessful attempts to conquer the Byzantine capital, Constantinople. By the time the Abbasids rose to power in 750, the military frontier between the Arabs and the Byzantines had stabilized in southeast Asia Minor. A number of energetic rulers revived the empire's military power toward the end of the tenth century and led campaigns into northern Syria. They recovered Antioch and forced the Hamdanid and Mirdasid dynasties based in Aleppo to pay tribute. Further expansion southward was

blocked by the ascendant Fatimid dynasty with its center in Egypt and domains in southern Syria. Byzantine power in eastern Asia Minor received a stunning blow in 1071 when the Saljuks defeated them at the Battle of Manzikert. Byzantine appeals to Christian Europe for military support against the Muslims contributed to the launching of the First Crusade. The Crusaders posed a grave military threat to Muslim Syria, but they did not strengthen the position of the Byzantines in Asia Minor. Instead, their power steadily dwindled as wave after wave of Turkish tribesmen made their way westward during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, fundamentally altering the demography of Asia Minor and ending its role as a launching pad for Christian offensives against Syria.

C

CALIPHATE.

After the death of Muhammad, the prophet of Islam, Muslims created this institution to represent the continuation of his political and spiritual authority. The first four caliphs, Abu Bakr (632-634), Umar (634-644), Uthman (644-656), and Ali (656-661), are known as the rightly-guided caliphs and they governed the growing Arab empire from the Arabian town of Medina, located in present-day Saudi Arabia. Following the assassination of Ali, Mu'awiya established the Umayyad caliphate with Damascus as the capital. The Umayyad dynasty lasted until 750 when it was replaced by the Abbasid caliphate, which moved the imperial center to Iraq and built a new city, Baghdad, to serve as the capital. The Abbasid caliphate represented the pinnacle of Islamic political and cultural achievement during the eighth and ninth centuries. By the middle of the tenth century, though, the caliphate had ceased to wield effective authority beyond the confines of Iraq. Syria had already fallen under the control of local forces and dynasties based in Egypt, such as the Fatimid dynasty, which put forth a competing claim to the caliphate. With the fall of the Abbasid dynasty to Mongol invaders in 1258, the institution ceased to have any real political power, although the Mamluk sultanate and later the Ottoman Empire

sustained a "shadow" caliphate until its final abolition by the Republic of Turkey in 1924.

CATHOLIC.

A latecomer to Syrian Christianity, the Roman Catholic Church established a foothold during the seventeenth century when the Jesuits began a proselytizing mission, not to convert Muslims to Christianity, but to bring eastern Christians into the fold of Catholicism. Jesuit and Capuchin priests went to Aleppo in 1626, and members of the Carmelite order followed. These efforts bore fruit during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when the Chaldaean Church broke from the Nestorian Church, the Greek Catholics from the Greek Orthodox, Syrian Catholics from the Syrian Orthodox (or Jacobite), and the Armenian Catholics from the Armenian Orthodox. An important incentive for conversion had little to do with theology and everything to do with mundane matters, for France was the primary European sponsor of Catholic efforts and had extensive economic and diplomatic influence in the Ottoman Empire. Apart from missionaries, French merchants and consuls encouraged eastern Christians to become Catholic with promises of economic benefits and protection from Christian piracy. The strong European commercial presence in Aleppo during the eighteenth century provided a bridge for Catholic missions, whose activities increased the city's Catholic population from four thousand in 1700 to nearly fifteen thousand by 1850. The eastern churches' hierarchies regarded the Catholics as interlopers and adopted a hostile attitude toward Rome and the various Uniate churches.

CHALDAEAN.

Uniate branch of the ancient Nestorian church established in 1672. The patriarch resides in Baghdad. About 15,000 Chaldaeans live in Jazira and Aleppo, but most of them are in Iraq.

CHRISTIANS.

They comprise about 14 percent of the population and live throughout the country. When the Muslim Arabs conquered Syria in the seventh century, most of the population was Christian and would remain so for several centuries.

Although historians have not been able to determine with precision the pace of conversion to Islam, it appears that Christians became a minority no later than the thirteenth century. Their status under Muslim dominion was that of a protected minority, or *dhimmi*, that was liable to pay a special tax and was excluded from political office, but otherwise exercised religious and communal freedoms. Anti-Christian persecution did erupt periodically, the best-known examples occurring in the Fatimid and Mamluk eras when Byzantine and Crusader military threats inflamed communal passions. But generally speaking, Christians in medieval and early modern Syria did not suffer harsh treatment or pressure to convert.

Their status began to change, however, in the eighteenth century with the growth of commerce with Europe, a trade from which Christians benefited as cultural brokers. Then, in the nineteenth century, the Ottoman reform program, or Tanzimat, further improved Christians' standing by declaring legal equality for all subjects regardless of religion. Many Muslims then grew resentful of the Christians' economic prosperity and believed that the Ottomans were favoring the Christians in order to placate the Europeans. A violent Muslim backlash exploded in the Aleppo massacre of 1850 and the July 1860 Damascus massacre. Although these events struck terror into Syrian Christians, their communities did not suffer any further attacks and they continued to prosper well into the twentieth century because of their European contacts. Since the late French Mandate era, Syrian Christians, particularly the Greek Orthodox, have played a significant role in Arab nationalist movements. Moreover, the status of Christians has continued to improve with the gradual secularization of law and society.

There are eight historical denominations. The three Orthodox churches are the Greek Orthodox, whose liturgy is in Greek and Arabic; the Syrian Orthodox, or Jacobite, whose liturgy is in Syriac; and the Armenian Orthodox, or Gregorian, whose liturgy is in Armenian. The five Uniate churches are in communion with Rome but retain their own liturgies. The Uniate groups are the Maronites (entered into

union with Rome in 1180), the Syrian Catholics (former Syrian Orthodox, established in 1783), the Greek Catholics (former Greek Orthodox, established in 1724), the Chaldaean Catholics (former Nestorians who became Uniates beginning in 1672), and the Armenian Catholics (former Armenian Orthodox, established in 1742). The Nestorians or East Syrian Christian Church have a Syriac liturgy and are separate from the Uniate and Orthodox churches. The distribution of different Christian denominations shows a preponderance of Greek Orthodox and a much smaller number of Greek Catholic along the coast, in the Orontes River valley, around Damascus, and in the Hawran. The Syrian interior, beginning with Homs and Hama, then extending north toward Aleppo and northeastward into Jazira is the domain of Jacobite, Armenian, and Nestorian Christians.

CIRCASSIANS.

Non-Arab Sunni Muslims who fled the Russian conquest of their homeland in the Caucasus Mountains in the late 1800s. In the 1860s the first Circassian refugees settled in small towns and villages north of Aleppo and in Jazira along the Khabur River, but high mortality rates from disease rapidly reduced their numbers. A second wave of refugees arrived in 1878 in the course of the Russo-Ottoman war of 1877-1878. This time the Ottomans directed them to settle in southern Syria, including the Hawran, Golan, and Transjordan, where the colonists founded Amman. A small number took up residence in villages east of Homs and Hama. In the French Mandate era, Circassians, like other minorities, were recruited into the *Troupes Spéciales du Levant*, which the French authorities used to repress nationalist strikes and demonstrations. During the June 1967 war, some 25,000 Circassians living in the Golan Heights were expelled. Most of the refugees resettled in Damascus and nearby villages; some emigrated to the United States.

COMMITTEE OF UNION AND PROGRESS.

A secret society, also referred to as the Young Turks, founded by advocates of constitutional government for the Ottoman Empire in 1889. First established among students at Istanbul's military college,

the movement's early membership included educated young men from various parts of the empire. During the 1890s, graduates stationed as bureaucrats and army officers in Aleppo, Damascus, Dayr al-Zur, Hama and Homs set up cells that attracted the interest and support of educated youth, ulama, civil servants, and urban notables (see QASIMI, JAMAL AL-DIN, JAZA'IRI, TAHIR). Authorities in Syria first detected CUP activities in 1896 among Turkish officers disgruntled over arrears in salaries and shortages in provisions. An investigation led to charges against several officers, civil administrators, and Damascus notables. After the arrest and exile of several members, no further evidence of Young Turk activity appeared until 1906, when a new cell was set up by junior officers upset with the endemic problem of arrears in salaries.

In July 1908 military units stationed in Macedonia and loyal to the CUP mutinied against Sultan Abdulhamid and forced him to restore the 1876 constitution. The CUP initially stayed in the background of Ottoman constitutional politics, but its leaders increasingly asserted themselves until they seized power in a coup d'etat in 1913. The CUP advocated policies designed to strengthen central control over the empire's provinces, including the exclusive use of the Turkish language in official business and education. Some Syrian Arabs believed the CUP sought to "turkify" the empire, that is, forcibly impose Turkish language and culture on the polyglot population. This perception prompted a defensive cultural reaction that sowed the seeds of the first Arab nationalist groups.

In 1914, the CUP's leadership governed the empire and took the fateful decision to enter World War I on the side of Germany. At the end of the war, with the Ottoman Empire defeated and occupied by foreign armies, the CUP leaders fled to Germany and the Soviet Union.

CONSPIRACY OF 1956.

A far-reaching plot, code-named "Operation Straggle," hatched in Beirut to overthrow Syria's neutralist government and install a pro-western regime. It was conceived by Syrian exiles in Lebanon, including members of

the Syrian Social National Party and purged army officers, who had support from the government of Iraq. Adib alShishakli, who had seized power in a military coup in 1949 and ruled until 1954, was living in France at the time and showed some interest at first, but he ditched the enterprise when he calculated its low chances for success. Great Britain was to provide weapons and funds and a number of civilian politicians were to help execute a coup. SSNP militiamen were to infiltrate Syria, assassinate leading leftist politicians, and trigger Druze and Alawi risings, which would be armed with weapons smuggled from Iraq. Military intelligence uncovered the plot and on 23 November 1956 announced the arrest of those participants living in Syria. The coup was timed to coincide with the attack on Egypt by Great Britain, France, and Israel at the end of October in a bid to eliminate the two neutralist Arab governments of Egypt and Syria and restore western dominance in Arab politics. The arrests and trials of the conspirators damaged conservative political forces and boosted the standing of leftist parties.

CONSTITUTION.

Syria first experienced a constitutional regime when it was still part of the Ottoman Empire from 1876 to 1877 and 1908 to 1918. After World War I, Amir Faysal tried to set up an independent Arab kingdom in Syria, and he handed the Syrian Congress the task of drafting a constitution. A draft was produced, but the Congress' consideration of it was interrupted by France's invasion in July 1920. The abortive constitution provided for a monarchy and bicameral legislature. During the French Mandate era, elections to a constituent assembly were held in April 1928. The assembly convened in June and issued a draft constitution by August. This first Syrian constitution provided for a parliamentary republic, equality for members of all religions and religious freedom, and a Muslim president. The French objected to articles declaring the unity of Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, and Transjordan; Syrian control over a national army; and presidential powers to conduct foreign relations. Consequently, French High Commissioner Henri Ponsot adjourned the assembly. Following two years of political

stalemate, the French enacted a modified version of the 1928 draft. When Syria became independent in 1943, it was under the terms of the constitution of 1930.

Alterations in the Syrian constitution were first heralded during the brief regime of Husni al-Za'im, who called for the drafting of a new document and appointed a special committee that produced a new constitution in July 1949. But Sami al-Hinnawi's coup in mid-August aborted that project and he authorized elections for a constituent assembly. These were held in November and the second People's Party, which generally supported Hinnawi, gained a plurality of seats. Adib al-Shishakli's overthrow of Hinnawi in December interrupted the constituent assembly's work, but it convened in 1950 and drew up a new constitution. Its most controversial article was one declaring Islam to be the religion of the state. The Syrian Social National Party, the Syrian Communist Party, the Ba'th Party, and the country's various Christian communities all argued for a secular constitution, while the Muslim Brothers supported the condition concerning religion. Ultimately, the constituent assembly agreed on a solution by preserving the 1930 constitution's stipulation that the head of state be a Muslim, and in September 1950 the assembly ratified the new document. Its main departures from the 1930 constitution lay in the proclamation of detailed civil liberties and the greater powers it assigned to the legislative branch compared to the executive branch. Shishakli challenged the constitution when he assumed dictatorial powers in November 1951. In March 1953 he called for a new constituent assembly to draw up yet another constitution. The 1953 document tipped the balance of power back in favor of the executive branch, but when Shishakli was overthrown in February 1954, Syria's civilian government restored the 1950 constitution.

With the formation in 1958 of the United Arab Republic, Syria came under a new constitutional arrangement that submerged Syrian representation in an Egyptian-dominated assembly and assigned broad powers to President Gamal Abd al-Nasir. When Syria seceded from the UAR, the 1950 constitution was restored but a new provisional constitution

was issued in November 1961 to govern elections for a constituent assembly. The military's continuous interference in politics, however, prevented implementation of that plan. The Ba'th Party regime introduced one more provisional constitution in April 1964. This document assigned executive powers to a new body called the Presidential Council and legislative powers to the National Revolutionary Command Council, stipulated state ownership of industry and minerals, and diluted the place of Islam by stating that shari'a comprises a source of legislation rather than the source.

The most recent constitutional changes began in May 1969 when the neo-Ba'th regime issued a new provisional constitution declaring Syria a democratic socialist republic. The regime of Hafiz al-Asad promulgated a permanent constitution in March 1973 that was similar to the 1969 document. It, too, stated that the head of state must be a Muslim, that Islamic law is the source of legislation, and that the Ba'th Party is the country's vanguard party. In keeping with Asad's supreme authority, the constitution also provides for strong presidential powers: He is commander in chief of the armed forces, appoints the prime minister and cabinet members, and has the power to dissolve the legislature and rule by decree. The legislative branch consists of a unicameral People's Assembly, whose members are elected every four years. As for the judicial branch, the constitution provides for its independence.

CORRECTIVE MOVEMENT.

The 13 November 1970 coup d'etat launched by Hafiz al-Asad against the radical neo-Ba'th regime headed by Salah al-Jadid. Tensions had been growing between the two former comrades, who had been founding members of the Military Committee a decade earlier in Cairo. Jadid's power base lay in the Ba'th Party while Asad controlled the armed forces. On 30 October, Jadid convened an emergency party congress, which dismissed Asad from the army and expelled him from the party. The congress ended on 12 November, and the very next day Asad arrested Jadid and other rivals. Asad publicly announced that his seizure of power was intended to rectify the excesses of the previous

regime, and he moved to broaden his political base by building a coalition with other political parties, enlarging the private sector's role in the economy, and mending relations with other Arab states. The corrective movement was the last in a long line of military coups dating to March 1949.

CRUSADES.

When this invasion of Syria commenced in 1097, the land was divided among Saljuk princes under the influence of their regents, or atabegs. The conquest of Antioch in 1098 marked the Crusaders' first success. Their primary aim was the recovery for Christendom of Jerusalem (conquered in 1099), so most campaigns focused on seizing and defending the holy city and on securing the Syrian coast for communications and transport to Europe. Consequently, the Crusaders threatened, but did not rule over the Syrian interior or its major towns. The four Frankish states were the County of Edessa (1098-1144), the Principality of Antioch (1098-1268), the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem (1099-1187, moved to Acre when the Muslims regained Jerusalem, 1192-1291), and the County of Tripoli (1109-1289).

The first Muslim leader of counterattacks against the Crusaders was the atabeg Imad al-Din al-Zangi (r. 1127-1146), the ruler of Aleppo and Mosul. The Muslim offensive was pursued by Nur al-Din Mahmud and Saladin until 1192. Although the Europeans briefly recovered Jerusalem (1239-1244), the first half of the thirteenth century mostly saw minor skirmishes between Latin kingdoms and Ayyubid principalities. The Franks' military energies focused instead on Egypt because of the access it offered to the Red Sea and Indian Ocean trade. The final Muslim assault on the Latin kingdoms came under the command of Syria's new Turkish masters, the Mamluk sultans, beginning in the 1260s with the storming of coastal and inland holdings from Nazareth to Antioch. The last toehold of the Crusades, the Island of Arwad, fell in 1303.

D

DAMASCUS.

The capital and largest city of modern Syria, Damascus is located on the eastern slopes of the Anti-Lebanon range on the edge of the Syrian desert. Situated in an arid region, Damascus has been the site of urban settlement for more than four thousand years because of the waters borne by the Barada River and their exploitation to irrigate the Ghuta oasis around the city. The city is mentioned in pharaonic records of the fifteenth century B.C. and it served as the main city of the Aramaean kingdom of Aram beginning in the eleventh century B.C. Like the rest of Syria, Damascus passed under a series of Mesopotamian powers between the eighth and sixth centuries B.C., then a period of Persian domination before Alexander the Great's conquest in 333 B.C. initiated nearly a millenium of Greco-Roman hegemony. The walls that surround much of the old city and its main thoroughfares date from Roman times.

In the course of the Muslim Arab conquest of Syria, the townspeople negotiated a peaceful Arab occupation in 635, but the next year, a powerful Byzantine army marched toward Damascus with the intention of recovering it. The Arabs withdrew south to the Yarmuk River, where the decisive Battle of Yarmuk took place in August 636. The Arabs then permanently retook the city at the end of the year. Damascus played its greatest role in Islamic history when the Umayyad caliphs (661-750) used it as their capital, but when the Abbasid dynasty (750-1258) came to power, the city was relegated to provincial status. For the next four centuries different powers ruled northern and southern Syria, and Damascus remained the most important city in the south. In 1154 it became the capital of a reunified Syria under the rule of Nur al-Din Mahmud, who fortified the city's defenses and revived its religious institutions. When Saladin incorporated Damascus into the Ayyubid (1176-1260) sultanate, the city was again reduced to a provincial capital, this time ruled from Egypt. Domination by rulers based in Egypt continued during the Mamluk sultanate (1260-1516) until the Ottoman

conquest, which marked the beginning of four-hundred-year rule from Istanbul.

During the eighteenth century, Damascus gained a greater degree of autonomy under the rule of various Azm governors and in the early nineteenth century it briefly came under the authority of Muhammad Ali, the ambitious ruler of Egypt. Following the Ottoman recovery of Syria in 1840, Damascus entered a period of transition characterized by the Ottoman reforms known as the Tanzimat and increasing economic interaction with Europe. The stresses these forces brought to the fore erupted in the July 1860 massacre of many of the city's Christians by Sunni townsmen and Druzes from the nearby countryside. The Ottomans responded with measures to tighten central control over the provincial capital, a process reinforced by improvements in transportation such as the railway linking Damascus to Beirut in 1894.

When Ottoman rule ended in 1918, Damascus became the capital of Amir Faysal's short-lived state and then the seat of the French Mandate's representative in Syria. When the country gained its independence in 1946, Damascus became the capital. Its population has grown from about 230,000 in the 1940s to nearly 2 million today.

DAWALIBI, MA'RUF AL- (1907-).

Professor of law at Damascus University, Dawalibi was elected to represent his native Aleppo in the 1947 parliament and the 1949 constituent assembly. He joined the People's Party in 1948, and by 1951 was one of the leading figures in the faction that favored a neutralist foreign policy and social reform at home. During the cabinet crisis of November 1951, he stepped forward to form a government that promised to establish civilian control over the gendarmerie and ministry of defense. If he had been able to follow through on this, Adib al-Shishakli's grip on power would have been ended, so he disbanded Dawalibi's cabinet on 29 November, twelve hours after it had been formed.

Dawalibi reemerged after Syria withdrew from the United Arab Republic in September 1961 and the People's Party prevailed in national elections that December. He

formed a cabinet with men from the People's and National parties. This conservative government then rescinded some of the socialist laws introduced under the UAR. As in 1951, Dawalibi refused to be hemmed in by the army's insistence on a role in politics; indeed on 24 March 1962 he publicly criticized officers for meddling. The army command then demanded that President Nazim al-Qudsi dissolve Dawalibi's cabinet, but he refused. Four days later Abd al-Karim al-Nahlawi carried out a coup that led to two weeks of confusion (see SECESSIONIST REGIME) but issued in Dawalibi's resignation.

DEMILITARIZED ZONES.

The Armistice of 1949 created three demilitarized zones between Syria and Israel. Although Article Five of the armistice declared that sovereignty over the zones had yet to be determined, Israel pushed her claim to possess the land. Syria's refusal to concede this point led to a series of escalating clashes between 1951 and 1967. Israel initiated projects to develop water resources and cultivate lands in the zones. Arab villages that obstructed Israeli expansion were destroyed and their inhabitants expelled. In response, Syrian forces would fire on the Israelis, whereupon Israel would retaliate. Fishing rights on the Sea of Galilee provided another point of conflict. In December 1955, Syrian forces tried to prevent Israeli fishing boats from plying waters near the DMZ. In retaliation, Israeli forces launched a broad attack on the Syrians. When Syrian fishermen ventured into the Sea of Galilee, Israeli gunboats would fire on them. In February 1960, Israel pursued cultivation of lands in the southern DMZ, again triggering Syrian fire. This time, Israeli land and air forces attacked a Syrian village and military positions overlooking the DMZ. Fighting escalated further in 1964 when Syria threatened to divert tributaries of the Jordan River in order to thwart Israel's National Water Carrier project. Israel's use of armor, artillery, and air power forced the Syrians to halt their diversion of the tributaries, but they then resorted to shelling Israeli settlements in the DMZ.

Between August 1966 and June 1967, the neo-Ba'th regime began an aggressive policy of launching air strikes in

addition to frequent shelling of Israeli settlements. On 6 April 1967, there occurred a major air battle in which Syria lost six fighter planes. At that point, Syria requested Egyptian support. President Gamal Abd al-Nasir's handling of the crisis led to the outbreak of the June 1967 war in which Israel drove the Syrians away from the 1949 armistice lines and occupied the Golan Heights.

DRUZE.

Members of this heterodox religious sect call themselves *muwahhidun*, "those who declare God's oneness." The Druzes comprise around 3 percent of the population. Threequarters of the Druze reside in Suwayda province, or Jabal Druze, where they account for nearly 90 percent of the population. Other concentrations of Druze settlement include the Golan Heights, Damascus and its environs, and the mountains west of Aleppo.

Historically, the Druze religion is an offshoot of Isma'ili Shi'ism, which appeared in the time of the Fatimid caliph alHakim (996-1021), who claimed to be the incarnation of God. An early preacher in the cult of al-Hakim was a Persian Isma'ili, Hamza ibn Ahmad. He recruited a band of missionaries to spread the faith throughout the Fatimid domains in Arabia, Egypt, and Syria. The name "Druze" is derived from one of the new religion's propagandists, Muhammad ibn Isma'il al-Darazi. Other propagandists won followers throughout Syria, especially in Aleppo and Damascus. When al-Hakim suddenly and mysteriously disappeared in 1021, official support for the new religion ended, and the next caliph ruthlessly suppressed it, so that Druzism survived only in isolated pockets of Lebanon and northern Syria. Active leadership of the movement passed to an associate of Hamza ibn Ahmad named Baha al-Din alMuqtana, also called al-Samuqi. This latter figure played the central role in creating a formal structure for the incipient religion and in gaining new converts. By the time of Baha alDin's death in 1043, a corpus of Druze teachings had been established in six books known as *The Noble Wisdom*, which contain 111 epistles by Hamza, Baha al-Din, and Isma'il alTamimi.

The beliefs and practices of the Druze religion are supposed to be kept secret from all outsiders, but in recent years scholars have published their religious texts. They teach belief in one God who was incarnate in the person of al-Hakim, and they hold that the believer must accept God's actions and submit to Him. Conversely, the Druzes must reject Satan. The epistles also emphasize truthfulness and the imperative of communal solidarity. Druzes believe their religion stands as a successor to ancient monotheistic cults reaching back to such Hellenistic figures as Pythagoras, Plato, and Plotinus, as well as the prophets of the Bible and the Qur'an. The Druzes do not observe the Muslim rituals of prayer, fasting, or pilgrimage. Another difference between the Druze religion and Islam is that, for the most part, the Druzes do not accept converts. They possess their own specialized religious leaders who manage civil matters like marriage (unlike Muslims, the Druzes do not allow polygamy) and inheritance. Full knowledge of their teachings is reserved for the religious hierarchy because one must demonstrate one's worthiness before initiation into esoteric knowledge.

Most Druzes lived in Lebanon until the eighteenth century, when some of them migrated to a plateau east of the Hawran in Jabal Druze. In Ottoman times they preserved their autonomy in the face of Istanbul's attempts to impose regular taxation in the late-nineteenth century. When the French Mandate was imposed in 1920, the Druzes sought to keep apart from a centrally administered regime, and the French placated them by creating an autonomous regime similar to the one they developed for the Alawis in northwest Syria. Nonetheless, French meddling in Jabal Druze sparked a rebellion under the leadership of Sultan al-Atrash that spread to the rest of Syria in the Great Revolt of 1925 to 1927. After the suppression of the revolt, the French continued the separate administration of Jabal Druze until 1936, when it was annexed to the rest of Syria. Damascus appointed Nasib al-Bakri to govern the province, but Druze opposition to rule by a non-Druze led the government to appoint a Druze to the office in 1937. France reinstated a separate administration in 1939 that lasted until 1942.

In the independence era, the Druzes continued to affect Syrian politics. In the early years, they supported politicians who leaned toward unity with Transjordan because of the ties forged between its Hashemite ruler Abdallah and a number of Druze leaders. In 1947 President Shukri al-Quwwatli tried to break Druze autonomist tendencies by inciting a peasant uprising against the landlord families that traditionally opposed central authority. The powerful Atrash clan, however, rallied its loyal supporters to quell the peasant rising. In March 1949, Husni al-Za'im seized power with support from the Druzes in return for a pledge to follow policies to their liking, but when he did not fulfill his promise, they began to plot against him. Za'im then dispatched an armored battalion to Jabal Druze, a move that quickened efforts that led to his overthrow in August. The Druzes also played a significant part in the 1954 overthrow of Adib al-Shishakli by launching a revolt against him in January. The last indication of traditional Druze autonomy is the existence of a separate set of personal status laws for the community.

E

ECONOMY.

Recent decades have seen impressive growth and development in the Syrian economy. The period since 1960 has been marked by two stretches of prolonged growth and one long slump. The first growth period occurred between 1960 and 1980. In the 1960s the average rate of growth was 4.5 percent, while in the 1970s it was more than 6 percent. The latter period had such high growth (5.5 percent from 1969 to 1974, 7.1 percent from 1974 to 1979) largely because President Hafiz al-Asad instituted policies to encourage foreign investment and Arab aid at the same time that Syria's own production and export of petroleum was increasing. Arab aid rose from \$50 million per year before the October 1973 war to \$600 million per year afterward. Other factors that contributed to economic growth included loans and grants from the World Bank, Europe, and the United States, and remittances from Syrians working in Arab Gulf countries. Moreover, during this period, petroleum surpassed cotton as

Syria's main export because of the rise in oil prices in 1973 and 1974.

This robust era of economic expansion ended in the mid-1980s when the GDP shrank nearly 3 percent per year from 1983 to 1987 and 9 percent in 1987, while population growth continued at 3.8 percent per year. Part of the reason for the slowdown was a cut in financial support from Arab Gulf regimes upset at Syria's support for Iran against Iraq in the first Gulf War. Furthermore, much of the capital received in the 1970s had been invested in public sector industries that operated with appalling inefficiency. When a severe crisis hit the country's foreign exchange, these industries lacked the capital to import parts and equipment necessary to continue in operation. Consequently, in the mid-1980s production at several factories came to a complete stop. The Asad regime responded to this distress by introducing measures to slowly liberalize the economy, including gradual moves that allowed the private sector to import goods that had previously been restricted to state companies and that made it easier for foreign companies to invest. The result was a recovery in economic growth at a rate of 8 percent between 1990 and 1993.

EDUCATION.

During the eighteenth century, European missions established schools in various parts of Syria, such as the Lazarist school that opened in Damascus in 1775. These tended to attract Syrian Christians. The spread of foreign mission schools received a boost during the Egyptian occupation in the 1830s (see IBRAHIM PASHA). The Egyptians also opened the first public schools, but they shut down with the restoration of Ottoman rule in 1840. A thorough program to modernize education in Syria was first implemented under the terms of the Ottoman Empire's 1869 law, which provided for the establishment of a system of elementary, intermediate, secondary, and high schools. One purpose of the new educational system was to oppose the influence of mission schools, which tended to inculcate loyalty to the nation sponsoring the school, usually France or Great Britain. The era of higher public education dawned in Syria in 1903 when the Ottoman Medical School was founded in

Damascus. The following year, a military preparatory school was opened in the city. During the brief rule of Amir Faysal, the Damascus Law Faculty was founded in 1919.

In the French Mandate era, there were government schools and private foreign schools operated by Catholic orders like the Jesuits and Dominicans. Government schools reached beyond their limited elite clientele of the late Ottoman era to embrace youths from urban middle-class families. In 1923, the Syrian University was founded in Damascus by combining the Law and Medicine faculties. For the most part, though, the French invested little in education; consequently, at independence, Syria had a high illiteracy rate and a low proportion of youths in schools.

Since independence in 1946, Syrian governments of various stripes have devoted large portions of the budget to educational development: 13.4 percent from 1946 to 1949, 14.5 percent from 1956 to 1959, and 18.6 percent from 1975 to 1982. This expenditure has not only made primary and secondary education widely available, but also established adult literacy programs and vocational training. Primary education is free and mandatory through the sixth year; secondary education is also free, but not compulsory. Primary and secondary education are under the authority of the Ministry of Education; postsecondary education is the responsibility of the Ministry of Higher Education.

To qualify for entrance to a university, Syrians must pass a national examination at the completion of secondary school. One's admittance to a particular faculty depends on one's score on that exam. Those with the highest scores may attend the Faculty of Medicine. Other preferred faculties include pharmacy, dentistry, engineering, and commerce. Attendance at university is tuition free. In 1958 Syrian University was renamed the University of Damascus. In the early 1980s it had around 75,000 students. The second-oldest center of higher learning is the University of Aleppo, which grew out of the Faculty of Engineering established in 1946 and became an independent university in 1958 with the addition of the Faculty of Agriculture. By the early 1980s it had around 30,000 students. Two smaller universities have been

established by the Ba'th Party regime of Hafiz al-Asad: Tishrin University at Latakia (founded in 1971) and Ba'th University at Homs (founded in 1979).

The general tendency in the independence period has been for the state to take over education. Private religious and foreign schools founded in the nineteenth century remained open, but their importance diminished with the rapid expansion of public schools. In 1967 the neo-Ba'thist regime extended state control over all schools when it gave the Ministry of Education supervision of private schools. This regime also put greater emphasis on technical and scientific elements in the curriculum. Agricultural schools were established at the secondary-education level. New institutions include the Veterinary Institute in Hama and the Electrical and Petrochemical Engineering Institute in Homs.

The Ba'thist regimes directed a greater share of the budget to education, with the result that during the 1960s the number of students at secondary schools rose from 140,000 to 480,000; the number of teachers grew from 6,000 to 28,000; and the number of such schools increased from 400 to 1,150. As for primary education, by 1971, 63 percent of children were in schools (80 percent of boys, 47 percent of girls), but a shortage of qualified teachers has hampered the expansion of education. In spite of these gains, illiteracy has remained high. In 1960, 60 percent of the population was still illiterate, 43 percent of men and 77 percent of women, of whom 94 percent were illiterate in rural areas. Nonetheless, the proportion of girl pupils in primary schools rose from 29 percent in 1946 to 34 percent in 1969, while the percentage of girls in secondary schools stayed at 24 percent. By the early 1990s, the illiteracy rate had fallen to 36 percent, 22 percent among males and 49 percent among females.

EGYPT.

When Syria became independent, Egypt's primary concern was to keep her out of any union plans proposed by the Hashemite rulers of Jordan and Iraq. In the inter-Arab contest for influence over Syria, Egypt tended to side with Saudi Arabia, which also sought to contain Hashemite ambitions. When the Cold War impinged on the Middle East

in the mid-1950s, Egyptian president Gamal Abd al-Nasir supported Syrians inclined to adopt a neutral foreign policy. Therefore Egypt and Saudi Arabia proposed a military alliance with Syria in March 1955 to counterbalance the Baghdad Pact's pro-western alliance of Iraq and Turkey. This was the first official step in bringing Egypt and Syria closer together as the vanguard of Arab neutralism. The first steps toward Syrian-Egyptian unity were taken in July 1957 when Foreign Minister Salah al-Din al-Bitar traveled to Cairo for talks. During the August-October 1957 crisis in Syrian relations with the United States, Egypt dispatched 2,000 soldiers as a gesture of solidarity against western pressures on the neutralist government. The upshot of the crisis was a sense of even greater urgency to unite with Egypt, if only to defend Syria against western pressures coming from the US, Turkey, and Iraq. On 1 February 1958, Syria and Egypt merged in the United Arab Republic. Egyptian domination of the UAR, though, generated widespread discontent in Syria, and in September 1961 Syria seceded from the union.

Syria and Egypt then entered a period of hostile relations as the two governments blamed each other for the failure of the UAR. An improvement in relations appeared possible following the March 8, 1963 coup, but the Ba'th Party's purge of Nasirists from the army and government ensured the continuation of poor relations. When the neo-Ba'th came to power in 1966 and backed a series of provocative raids on Israel by Palestinian guerrillas, Nasir tried to increase his influence over Syria's actions by arranging a defense pact, and the two countries exchanged ambassadors for the first time since the formation of the UAR in 1958. But Nasir's inept handling of a military crisis with Israel in May 1967 led to the June 1967 war in which both Egypt and Syria lost territory. For the next three years, Syrian-Egyptian relations again soured because of Egypt's acceptance of United Nations Resolution 242 as a basis for resolving the conflict with Israel, while Syria rejected the resolution.

In the autumn of 1970 important changes in leadership occurred in both countries. Nasir died and Anwar Sadat succeeded him as president of Egypt; and Hafiz al-Asad

seized power in the corrective movement. The two new leaders strove to improve relations, and they cooperated in devising plans for a surprise attack on Israel. This resulted in the October 1973 war, a unique instance of coordinated Arab military action against Israel. After the war, though, Sadat took Egypt on a separate course of disengagement from the conflict, and once again its relations with Syria were marked by serious strains. These tensions became complete rupture when Sadat made a separate peace with Israel in 1978. Syria then severed relations and embarked on a military buildup in order to confront Israel alone. Largely because of the war between Iran and Iraq, Egypt gradually restored its ties with Arab governments in the mid-1980s. When the war ended in Iraq's favor in July 1988, Syria was isolated in the Arab world for its support of Iran. To improve its regional position, Syria renewed relations with Egypt at the end of 1989. The extent of the Syrian-Egyptian rapprochement was evident in their agreement to send troops to Saudi Arabia in 1990 in response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and in Syria's assent to attend the Madrid Conference of December 1991.

EISENHOWER DOCTRINE.

American policy announced on 5 January 1957 to commit United States military power to defend any Middle Eastern country against external or internal communist subversion. American fear of communist influence in the Arab world increased with the decline of British and French power in the aftermath of the 1956 Suez war. Furthermore, the Soviet Union had succeeded in deepening its relations with Egypt and Syria in the previous two years. Syria immediately rejected the doctrine's assumption that any Arab country was threatened by communist takeover. There followed several months of worsening relations with the United States, climaxed by the expulsion in August of three American diplomats for allegedly plotting a coup d'etat. Syrian fears of an American plot persisted until October, when Saudi Arabia initiated a successful diplomatic campaign to reduce tensions.

EUPHRATES RIVER.

This waterway runs through Syria for 670 km between the borders of Turkey and Iraq and provides 80 percent of Syria's water. The Euphrates' total length is 2,333 km. About 90 percent of its water comes from streams in Turkey, and its flow decreases near the border with Syria. The level of the Euphrates fluctuates sharply between high levels reached between November and May and low levels during the hot season. Before modern times, settlement along the river was sparse, the region being dominated by the bedouin. But beginning in the late Ottoman era, central government authority has been extended with the posting of garrisons and the development of towns around them. This process facilitated agricultural colonization and the settlement of most bedouin. Raqqa and Dayr al-Zur are the main towns along the river, each with populations around 100,000.

Since independence, Syrian planners have developed projects to more fully exploit the river. The Euphrates Dam at Tabqa was built between 1968 and 1973. It has increased the amount of land that can be irrigated and it generates most of Syria's electrical power. Because of Syria and Iraq's dependence on the Euphrates and Turkey's ability to divert its waters, the river's exploitation has become a sensitive issue in relations among the three countries. If Turkey uses too much water, the level of Lake Asad behind the Tabqa Dam drops too low to operate the dam's eight turbines. By the same token, increases in Syrian use of Euphrates waters lessens the flow into Iraq. In recent years, Turkey has been developing a massive hydraulic scheme, the Southeast Anatolia Development Project, which threatens to further reduce the flow of the Euphrates into both Syria and Iraq.

F

AL-FATAT.

The Young Arab Society (*al-Jam'iyya al-arabiyya alfatat*) was a secret society organized by Arab students in Paris in 1911 to promote Arabs' rights in the Ottoman Empire. In 1913, al-Fatat members in Paris convened an Arab Congress to advance their demands with the support of other groups for greater Arab autonomy in the provinces. During World War

I, al-Fatat abandoned its original program and began to strive for Arab independence from the Ottoman Empire and the establishment of a unitary state in Arab provinces of the empire. The group secretly met with Amir Faysal in 1915 and supported the Hashemite-led Arab Revolt that broke out the following year. When Faysal established his Arab government in 1918, members of al-Fatat played a leading role as government officials, military officers, and members of Faysal's staff. Many members of al-Fatat went on to become leading nationalists during the French Mandate era.

FATIMID DYNASTY.

This Isma'ili Shi'i dynasty first rose in North Africa (present-day Tunisia) in 909. After conquering Egypt in 969, they fought with fellow Isma'ili Qarmatis based in Bahrain for control over southern Syria. The Fatimids consolidated their authority in Damascus in 983, and then contended with the Hamdanids for supremacy in the north. For a century the Fatimids ruled southern Syria and wavered between direct rule and accommodation to other powers' influence in northern Syria. Thus, they coexisted with the Hamdanids and the Mirdasids. In Damascus the Fatimids began the practice of installing Turkish garrisons to maintain order in the city and its environs. When the Fatimids attempted to rule northern Syria, they came into conflict with the Byzantines on several occasions in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries. Because of the Byzantines' greater military power, the Fatimids sometimes acquiesced to the emperor's claim on Aleppo and the rest of northern Syria as tributaries.

One of the curious episodes of Fatimid history involves the Caliph al-Hakim (r. 996-1021), certainly one of the most eccentric rulers in all Islamic history and the focal point for the development of the Druze religion. His reign was notable for other aspects. Early Fatimid policy toward Jews and Christians had been markedly tolerant to the extent that a number of high posts were assigned to them. By contrast, alHakim persecuted non-Muslims, seized their properties, and destroyed churches. In 1009 he outraged Christians in the Middle East and Europe by having the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem demolished. Four years later he

relaxed restrictions on Christians and Jews, for he frequently reversed policies. Among his constructive acts was the establishment of a special institute for the study of Shi'i doctrines and to train Isma'ili propagandists. Al-Hakim also succeeded in extending direct Fatimid authority to Aleppo for the first time in 1017. The Mirdasids took the city six years later, but for the next five decades they usually acknowledged Fatimid suzerainty. Also in 1017 the first signs of a new religion appeared among Isma'ili propagandists suggesting that al-Hakim was not merely the imam but also the divine incarnation. This teaching angered not only Sunnis but also traditional Isma'ilis, and early Druze teachers came under attack in Egypt. After al-Hakim's disappearance in 1021, Druze missionaries left Egypt to spread the religion in Syria.

Soon after al-Hakim's reign, Fatimid power in Syria began to wane as local forces challenged the Isma'ili caliphate and bands of Turcomen migrated into Syria. To complicate matters for the Fatimids, their own garrisons in Syrian towns were riven with feuds between Turkish and Berber factions. In 1076, a Turcoman chief, who had served the Fatimids in campaigns against bedouin tribes, revolted and seized Damascus. Three years later, the Turcoman handed power over to the new great power of the region, the Saljuk Turks, thereby ending a century of Fatimid preeminence in Syria.

FAYSAL IBN HUSAYN AL-HASHIMI (1885-1933).

A son of Sharif Husayn ibn Ali, leader of the Arab Revolt against the Ottoman Empire during World War I, and ruler of a short-lived independent Syrian state from October 1918 until July 1920. A year before the outbreak of the Arab Revolt, Faysal, a native of Mecca in western Arabia, visited Damascus, where he forged the basis for cooperation with members of the secret Arab nationalist society al-Fatat. When the revolt broke out a year later, Faysal led Arab forces on their march into Syria and entered Damascus in October 1918. He then established a provisional military government supported by his wartime Arab nationalist allies as well as subsidies and diplomatic backing from Great Britain. Faysal's nascent state was nonetheless vulnerable to French pressures. Moreover,

he came to Syrian politics as an outsider and therefore lacked a solid political base. His efforts to secure Syrian independence by attending the Paris Peace Conference in 1918-1919 were ultimately futile because of France's insistence on establishing direct control over the interior. Faysal's fate was sealed in November 1919 when British troops began to withdraw from Syria, leaving the way open to French occupation.

Faysal convened the Syrian Congress in March 1920. The Congress formally declared Syria's independence, proclaimed Faysal king of Syria, and formed a government under a prime minister appointed by Faysal. He then tried to negotiate with France and offered to recognize its primary standing among foreign powers in Syria, but his willingness to compromise Arab sovereignty undermined his position among nationalists at home. When French troops invaded, the outmatched Syrian forces resisted at the Battle of Maysalun, near Damascus, on 24 July 1920. The French commander drove Faysal out of Damascus, and on 1 August he left Syria, although he did later become king of Iraq. While Faysal's brief rule is primarily known for its tumultuous politics, a number of notable cultural institutions, such as a museum and a scientific academy, were established as an expression of Syria's increasingly Arab nationalist culture.

FEBRUARY 23, 1966 COUP.

This coup by the neo-Ba'th against the first Ba'thist regime brought to power Syria's most radical government. It was precipitated by a heightening in the power struggle between the Ba'th Party's old guard and younger factions. On 21 February, supporters of the old guard in the army ordered the transfer of their rivals. Two days later, the Military Committee, backing the younger factions, launched a coup that entailed bloody fighting in Aleppo, Damascus, Dayr al-Zur, and Latakia.

FERTILE CRESCENT PLAN.

Iraqi Hashemite plan for the union of Iraq with Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, and Transjordan. Iraq's Prime Minister Nuri al-Sa'id broached the plan to British officials during World War II, when it appeared that

France had become too weak to hold on to Syria. This Arab unity scheme faced opposition from those Syrians who did not wish to live under a monarchy or enter a pro-British alliance. During the independence period, the Iraqi government poured money into the pockets of Syrian politicians who favored unity. In addition, the second People's Party, representing northern Syrian commercial and landholding interests, favored the Fertile Crescent Plan and initiated diplomatic steps to implement it. On the other hand, the National Party and factions in the army were determined to block any plans for unity with Iraq as long as it had a military treaty with Great Britain. The closest the plan came to fruition was during the regime (August-December 1949) of Colonel Sami al-Hinnawi, who had installed a People's Party government that entered negotiations to achieve unity. The opportunity was aborted by Colonel Adib al-Shishakli's coup d'etat. Any remaining glimmer of hope for the Fertile Crescent Plan vanished with the overthrow of Iraq's monarchy in July 1958.

FIVE-YEAR PLANS.

Syria introduced its first five-year plan for 1960 to 1965 during the United Arab Republic period. It aimed to develop agriculture and mining resources, as well as launch construction of a railroad between Latakia and Qamishli, but the political turmoil of those years hampered implementation of the plan. The second plan (1966-1970) devoted the greatest share of investment to developing the petroleum industry and the Euphrates Dam at Tabqa, which was supposed to expand the area of irrigated agriculture and generate electricity. Large sums also went to transportation, communications, public works, and housing. The third fiveyear plan (1971-1975) sought to complete the Euphrates Dam and to further develop industrial production and energy resources. Endemic problems in achieving the plans' goals shaped the fourth plan (1976-1980) as did shortages in agricultural products. This plan tried to revive agriculture by giving it a quarter of public investment (compared with 10 percent in the third plan). The fifth plan (1981-1985) mainly invested in finishing projects left over from previous plans and reduced investment in agriculture. Since the mid-1980s, the

regime of Hafiz al-Asad has had to rely more on the private sector as the engine of economic growth and diminish the state's role in the economy. Consequently, while a sixth plan (1986-1990) was drawn up, the regime did not try to implement it, and a seventh plan for 1991 to 1995 was never completed, marking the end of centralized economic planning.

FRANCE.

In July 1920 French armed forces invaded Syria from Lebanon to impose France's rule under the terms of a mandate it had received from the League of Nations by the San Remo Agreement the previous April. French interests in Syria dated to the eighteenth century in the form of Catholic missions and a strong commercial presence in Aleppo. In the last decades of Ottoman rule, France became the European power with the largest economic stake in the Ottoman Empire. In Syria, French companies invested in various transportation projects, public utilities, financial institutions and tobacco. During World War I, French and British diplomats concluded the Sykes-Picot Agreement, which divided the Ottoman Arab lands into spheres of influence. This plan assigned Syria (including Lebanon) to France. At the end of the war, however, British troops occupied Syria and assisted the establishment of an independent regime under Amir Faysal. The French suspected Britain of intentionally violating the terms of Sykes-Picot in order to undermine France's position in the region. There followed intense negotiations at Versailles that ended with Britain's agreement in September 1919 to withdraw its forces from Syria. Faysal tried to negotiate an arrangement with France whereby the latter would recognize Syria's independence in return for his promise to grant France exclusive control over foreign relations and the right to provide assistance in developing Syria's nascent military and administrative institutions. The French government, however, was determined to directly control Syria, so it expelled Faysal and dismantled his government in July 1920, thereby inaugurating the French Mandate that would persist for nearly twenty-six years.

FRANCO-SYRIAN TREATY OF 1936.

During the French Mandate, Syrian nationalists came to realize that France would not grant Syria independence unconditionally, but that a treaty guaranteeing France's special status in the country's affairs after independence might bring about an early end to the mandate. Negotiations between an elected Syrian government under Haqqi al-Azm and French High Commissioner Damien de Martel reached agreement in November 1933, but the Syrian Chamber of Deputies gave the draft treaty a chilly reception because it left Jabal Druze and the Alawi state in Jabal Ansariyya under separate administrations. Martel reacted by suspending the Chamber for the next two years. In March 1936 the French High Commissioner allowed a Syrian delegation, headed by Hashim al-Atasi, to travel to Paris to negotiate a treaty directly with the French government. The atmosphere for talks improved that June with the election in France of the leftist Popular Front government, and the two sides reached agreement in September.

In the Franco-Syrian Treaty, Paris conceded the inclusion of Jabal Druze and the Alawi region in a unified Syrian state but under special administrations, while the Syrians consented to clauses granting France air bases and garrisons. For the treaty to come into force, it needed ratification by Syrian and French parliaments and then Syrian admission to the League of Nations. In the end, the treaty failed. The National Bloc, which triumphed in Syria's November 1936 elections, formed a government to guide Syria toward treaty ratification and independence. Syrian parliament ratified the treaty and the French High Commissioner signed it in December, but the agreement's opponents in France rallied conservative sentiment to prevent its ratification by French parliament. The French government then sought modifications to the treaty in order to mollify conservative critics, but when Syrian prime minister Jamil Mardam showed flexibility, he was undercut by his own nationalist hardliners. By the end of 1938, it was clear that the 1936 treaty would never be implemented.

FRANKLIN-BOUILLON AGREEMENT.

By this October 1921 accord between France and Turkey, France relinquished its claims to a sphere of influence in southeastern Anatolia and disputed lands on the northern Turkey-Syria frontier. The Agreement stipulated a special regime for the Sanjak of Alexandretta by which it would be kept separate from the rest of Syria under French control and Turkish would be recognized as an official language. In return, the Turkish government agreed to stop supporting the rebel movements of Ibrahim Hananu and Shaykh Salih al-Ali.

FRENCH MANDATE.

France ruled Syria between July 1920 and April 1946 under the terms of the mandate system, which was created after World War I by the League of Nations to provide a legal basis and mechanisms for European rule over areas of the Middle East occupied during the war. In theory, certain countries were not prepared to rule themselves; therefore, European countries assumed the duty to guide and prepare such countries for independence. France received a provisional mandate over Syria and Lebanon in April 1920 under the San Remo Agreement. According to the League of Nations terms for the mandate, France was supposed to draft a constitution and guide the development of governing institutions. The mandate also made France responsible for Syria's defense, internal security, and foreign relations. Three months after San Remo, a French expeditionary force put teeth into the mandate by invading Syria and at the Battle of Maysalun defeated Arab nationalists defending Amir Faysal's fragile state. France then detached several regions from Syria and attached them to Lebanon in August 1920, thereby creating the modern boundaries of an enlarged Lebanon. Then the mandatory power divided Syria into four separate districts: Aleppo, Damascus, Jabal Druze, and Latakia (for the Alawis). In 1925, France created a Syrian state by combining Damascus and Aleppo, but it left the Druze and Alawi regions under separate administrations, and Alexandretta became a special district as a concession to Turkey's concerns over the future of Turks living there.

During the mandate's first five years, Syrian resistance took various forms: revolts in the north led by Ibrahim Hananu and Shaykh Salih al-Ali and organized political movements such as Abd al-Rahman Shahbandar's People's Party. The first serious threat to French authority came from a 1925 uprising that spread from Jabal Druze to the rest of the country in the Great Revolt, which lasted for two years before French reinforcements suppressed it. In order to meet Syrian demands for political evolution and to satisfy European pressures for a policy besides repression, France organized elections for a constituent assembly in April 1928. The leading nationalist organization, the National Bloc, was able to dominate the assembly's proceedings even though its members were a minority, and by the end of July the assembly issued a draft constitution. But because the constitution contained articles that effectively eliminated France's legal authority in Syria, the High Commissioner rejected the draft and adjourned the assembly. There followed two years of political stalemate that ended in May 1930 when France promulgated a modified version of the 1928 draft as the basis for national elections to parliament. When these were held in December 1931-January 1932, the National Bloc won just seventeen out of sixty-nine seats.

The next major political matter was negotiating a Franco-Syrian Treaty to govern relations between the two countries in the event of Syria gaining its independence. Because the National Bloc's parliamentary members prevented the passage of formulations preferred by France, the High Commissioner suspended parliament in November 1933. Stalemate on the treaty continued until the General Strike of January-March 1936 induced the French to invite Bloc leaders to Paris to negotiate the terms of a treaty. This time, efforts to reach agreement bore fruit and the draft treaty provided mechanisms for Syria's eventual independence and admittance to the League of Nations. Fresh from this diplomatic triumph, the National Bloc swept national elections to parliament, and before the end of the year, Syria had its first elected nationalist government. At the same time, Jabal Druze and the Alawi Territory, previously under separate administrations,

were incorporated into Syria. Against these achievements, however, Syrians had to reckon with France's bowing to Turkey's ambitions to annex Alexandretta in order to gain Turkish neutrality in the event of a war with Italy. This debacle and the failure to secure French ratification of the 1936 treaty led the government to resign in February 1939. On the eve of World War II the High Commissioner suspended the constitution, dissolved parliament, and resumed separate administrations for Jabal Druze and Latakia.

When France fell to Axis forces in 1940, a pro-Vichy regime was established in Syria, but a combined British-Free French force invaded Syria and Lebanon in 1941 to remove Vichy officials. The preponderance of British troops in the invasion force made Britain the dominant military power and drastically diminished France's ability to determine its own policy toward Syria. Meanwhile, the Free French authorities had declared Syria's independence on the eve of the invasion and after consolidating their authority, but they moved very slowly in actually transferring power to the Syrians. The French ended separate administrations for Jabal Druze and Latakia, then in 1943 allowed national elections, which were swept by Shukri al-Quwwatli's National Party, the successor to the National Bloc. In early 1945, the French sought to prolong their rule. That triggered a new round of nationalist demonstrations in May. The French suppressed the protests with a bombardment of Damascus that killed 400 Syrians, whereupon British forces seized control from the French. The last French troops withdrew on 17 April 1946.

G

GENERAL STRIKE OF 1936.

This protest gave fresh momentum to the nationalist movement, which had been stalled since the 1933 suspension of parliament. When French Mandate authorities arrested prominent members of the National Bloc and closed its offices in Damascus, demonstrations in that city, Aleppo, Hama, and Homs shattered a lull in anti-French activities on 20 January. Merchants then went on a strike that spread to all major towns, and demonstrations spread

throughout the country. Confrontations between protestors and troops resulted in dozens of deaths. The League of National Action, a radical pan-Arab movement, organized protest marches in Damascus, while the National Bloc demanded the restoration of the 1930 constitution before the strike would be called off. For five weeks commercial activity was frozen and students boycotted attendance at schools. Finally, on 2 March the French agreed to the formation of a Syrian delegation to travel to Paris to negotiate a Franco-Syrian Treaty. When French authorities released the nationalist leaders they had arrested, the Bloc ended the strike.

GHAB.

A low-lying rift northwest of Hama between the eastern edge of the Jabal Ansariyya and the Zawiya Mountains, it is 80 km from north to south and about 15 km from east to west. The Orontes River passes through it from south to north. Until recently, the Ghab was a vast swamp, but two barrages on the Orontes and drainage of the marshes have reclaimed the land for cultivation. Work on reclamation began in 1954 with the deepening of the riverbed, the diversion of the river, and the construction of a dam to channel water to irrigation canals. When the project was completed in 1968, the new irrigation system made possible the cultivation of wheat and barley in the winter, and cotton, rice, and sugar beets in the summer.

GHANIM, WAHIB AL- (1919-).

Early member of the Ba'th Party and an associate of Zaki al-Arsuzi when they both lived in Alexandretta and then Damascus. Ghanim got his training in medicine and then opened a practice in Latakia, where he recruited educated youths, including future president Hafiz al-Asad, into the party. In 1947, party cofounders Michel Aflaq and Salah al-Din al-Bitar met with Ghanim and persuaded him to bring some of Arsuzi's followers into their movement. Consequently, he attended the Ba'th's founding congress in April 1947, and was elected to its four-man executive committee. In 1954 Ghanim was one of twenty-two party members to win a seat in parliament, and he became Minister of Health in Sabri al-Asali's February to September 1955

government. The party's Syrian branch dissolved itself on the eve of the United Arab Republic's formation, causing deep disarray and internal strife. When the Ba'th reemerged after Syria's secession from the UAR, Ghanim was no longer a member, but he ran for parliament and won in the December 1961 election, this time as an independent from Latakia. Following the March 8, 1963 coup, though, he dropped out of politics.

GHAZZI, SA'ID AL- (1897-1967).

Nonpartisan prime minister from 19 June to 14 October 1954, and again from 13 September 1955 to 2 June 1956. This lawyer from an old Damascus family belonged to the National Bloc from 1928 to 1936, and served in cabinets during the early independence period. The first time Ghazzi was prime minister his task was to form a nonpartisan government that would preside over parliamentary elections in September 1954, Syria's first free elections after four years of military dictatorship under Adib al-Shishakli. Ghazzi pledged to keep the government from interfering in the election. The result was a large gain for leftist parties, particularly the Ba'th Party, which won twenty-two seats. The Syrian Communist Party's Khalid Bakdash and the neutralist Khalid al-Azm were also elected. After the elections a new cabinet formed and Ghazzi stepped down.

In September 1955 President Shukri al-Quwwatli invited Ghazzi to head another government that pursued a neutralist foreign policy, meaning that Syria would not join the Baghdad Pact formed earlier that year. To stiffen Syria's resistance to western pressures for adherence to the Pact, Ghazzi's government negotiated the Egyptian-Syrian Defense Pact in October and developed closer ties to the Soviet Union, concluding military and commercial agreements with the Soviet bloc. In June 1956 the shaky conservative coalition that kept his cabinet together came unraveled and Ghazzi resigned.

GHUTA.

This is a general term for a cultivated area in the midst of arid land that is dependent on springwater diverted to irrigation channels. More specifically, the Ghuta is the broad

cultivated area of ten by twelve miles around Damascus watered by the Barada River and its six man-made branches. There are several large villages and many smaller ones in this densely populated oasis. A great variety of crops are cultivated: cucumbers, grapes, onions, melons, and eggplants; the orchards include apricot, almond, cherry, fig, walnut, peach, pear, and plum trees.

GOLAN HEIGHTS.

The high plateau in southwestern Syria that Israel occupied in the June 1967 war. The Heights average 1,000 meters in altitude and comprise an area of approximately 1,750 square km. From north to south the Heights run for 65 km and have a width of 12 to 25 km. The region is of key strategic significance because it dominates the topography where the borders of Israel, Lebanon, and Syria converge. Moreover, the sources of the Jordan and Yarmuk rivers spring from the Golan Heights.

During the 1967 war about 35,000 Syrians fled their homes, and by early 1968 the Israeli occupation had displaced another 100,000 Syrians; the Israelis allowed only about 10,000 Syrians, mostly Druzes, to remain. In 1968 Israel established its first settlement on the Golan Heights. In the next four years, Israel introduced only about 600 settlers, but after the October 1973 war, that number grew to 1,800 in one year and to 7,000 by 1980. By 1990, Israel had constructed thirty-five more settlements with a total Jewish population of 13,000; the Syrian population in the six remaining Arab villages numbered 16,000. Moreover, in December 1981, Israel declared the extension of its law to the Heights, effectively annexing them.

Israel's 1967 occupation of the Golan Heights changed the nature of its conflict with Syria. It was no longer a matter of Arab solidarity; now the confrontation involved the recovery of occupied territory. Syrian determination to recover the Heights lay behind President Hafiz al-Asad's collaboration with Egyptian President Anwar Sadat to launch the October 1973 war. After the war, Syria recovered a small portion of the Heights, including the district center Qunaytra, which had been demolished by the Israelis. Syria's primary

goal in the Syrian-Israeli peace talks since 1992 has been the recovery of the entire region, whereas Israel has declared its willingness to undertake a partial withdrawal in exchange for normal relations.

GREAT REVOLT.

This Syrian revolt of 1925 to 1927 against the French Mandate began in Jabal Druze and spread to the rest of the country. In the first few years of the mandate, Druze notables objected to the erosion of their traditional authority. When French officials arrested a number of Druze chiefs in Damascus, Sultan al-Atrash launched a revolt to drive the French out of their region beginning on 18 July 1925. A month later, nationalist leaders of the first People's Party met in Damascus with representatives of Atrash to agree on a plan to widen the revolt. In October and November, Damascus, Hama and other towns also rose in revolt, but for the most part rebel activities were confined to the Syrian countryside south of Damascus and between Damascus and Homs. On 18 October, several hundred armed nationalists entered the old city of Damascus and took it over. The French responded with artillery and air attacks on the old city for the next two days, killing several hundred civilians.

In March 1926, the French initiated a major campaign to regain control over rebel-held territory in central and southern Syria. The next month, French forces seized Suwayda, the main city in Jabal Druze. Then on 7 May, French warplanes bombarded the Maydan quarter of Damascus to destroy rebel strongholds there and to expel the rebels from the city. As the French poured in thousands of troops in 1926, they made headway in suppressing the revolt, and by the end of the year had regained control over most of the country. In July 1927, the Great Revolt came to an end as the French pacified the last pockets of resistance around Hama and in Jabal Druze. The Great Revolt marked the first nationwide political movement in modern Syrian history.

GREATER SYRIA.

This term refers to the territory of historical Syria and includes the contemporary nations of Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and the Turkish province of Hatay

(Alexandretta). Since France and Great Britain partitioned historical Syria after World War I into four separate territories, there have been various political movements and forces seeking to establish a unified Greater Syrian state. Amir Abdallah, the Hashemite ruler of Transjordan, hoped to annex Syria, Lebanon, and Palestine to his domain. During World War II, when it was apparent that the French Mandate would soon expire, Abdallah campaigned for the unification of Syria and Transjordan under his throne. The first elected president of Syria, Shukri al-Quwwatli, a longtime supporter of Saudi Arabia's interests, made it clear that Syria would not join on Abdallah's terms, but that Transjordan could become part of the Syrian Republic. The Hashemite ruler's attention was also drawn to Palestine, and his forces occupied portions of that land in the Palestine War of 1948. After Abdallah's death in 1951, leadership in the Hashemite family passed to his nephew Abdul-Ilah, the regent of Iraq and advocate of the rival Fertile Crescent Plan for Iraqi hegemony. The Syrian Social National Party founded by Antun al-Sa'ada also sought to restore what he considered to be Syria's natural unity.

GREEK CATHOLIC.

Former Greek Orthodox Christians who since 1724 have converted to the Catholic rite. They are also known as Roman Catholics and as Melkites. In the eighteenth century, Greek Catholics tended to come from the wealthier and better-educated ranks of urban Christians, particularly in Aleppo and Damascus. In the second half of that century, a number of Greek Catholics, under pressure from the Orthodox, emigrated to coastal towns of Lebanon and Palestine as well as to Egypt, where they became crucial players in that country's growing trade with Europe. Their patriarch of Antioch is currently resident in Damascus. Today Greek Catholics live mostly in Damascus and Aleppo, and they number around 160,000.

GREEK ORTHODOX.

The largest Christian community in Syria and until 1453 also known as Melkites. The Greek Orthodox church consists of four patriarchates: Constantinople,

Alexandria, Jerusalem, and Antioch. Syrian followers are under the see of Antioch, which is mostly Arab. These Christians adhered to the official imperial dogma of the Byzantine Empire, and because of their affiliation with the Byzantine church, for centuries a formidable military foe of Muslim dynasties, the Greek Orthodox suffered greater intolerance and suspicion than did other eastern Christians. They did not get along well with the Crusaders, who represented Latin Christianity, yet Muslims suspected the Melkites of sympathy with the Frankish invaders.

During the Ottoman era, the patriarch of Constantinople reasserted his authority over his Syrian flock, but by the seventeenth century, the Greek Orthodox of Syria had abandoned the Greek liturgy and adopted Arabic in its stead, setting the stage for friction with the patriarchate between speakers of Greek and Arabic. In the nineteenth century, they sought the support and protection of the Russian Empire. In the twentieth century, Orthodox Arabs have shown a strong propensity for Arab nationalism. Antioch was the seat of the patriarch, but in modern Syria his residence is in Damascus, and the patriarch has been an Arab since 1899. Greek Orthodox Christians are concentrated in Damascus, Latakia, Homs, Hama, and villages along the Homs Gap in a region called the Valley of the Christians (*Wadi al-Nasara*).

H

HAFFAR, LUTFI AL- (1891-).

A wealthy merchant and prominent nationalist politician who served as minister in several cabinets during the French Mandate and early independence periods. His first political association was with Abd al-Rahman Shahbandar and the People's Party established in 1925. After the suppression of this party, Haffar became a founding member of the National Bloc and acquired a reputation for advocating economic nationalism. He was the guiding force behind the construction of the first public water system for Damascus, completed in 1932, under the auspices of one of Syria's first publicly held companies, the Ayn al-Fija Company. During the brief period of National Bloc rule,

1936 to 1939, Haffar became prime minister in February 1939. His cabinet was buffeted by criticism from radical nationalists for a willingness to compromise with France and by the incipient revolt of Sulayman al-Murshid in the northwest. Haffar stepped down after a month in office.

In the independence era, Haffar was elected to parliament and served as minister of the interior from 1943 to 1946. He also participated in founding the National Party and briefly served as its chief.

HAFIZ, AMIN AL- (1920-).

Strongman of the first Ba'thist regime, 1963 to 1966. Hafiz was a Sunni officer from Aleppo who had participated in the February 1954 coup against Adib al-Shishakli. During the United Arab Republic era, he was posted to Cairo, where members of the Military Committee met him and grew to trust him even though he was not a member of the Ba'th Party. In December 1961, he was sent to Argentina as military attache, but following the March 8, 1963 coup, he was invited to return to Syria and become minister of the interior, essentially to serve as the front man for the Military Committee. In June Hafiz added the ministry of defense to his portfolio, and the following month he became Chief of Staff and chairman of the National Revolutionary Command Council. In November he replaced Salah al-Din al-Bitar as prime minister. Following the April 1964 riots in Hama, he stepped down as prime minister, but returned to office again in September.

In terms of the Ba'th Party's internal power struggles, Hafiz at first leaned toward neither the original leadership nor the Military Committee, the two main factions that struggled for control. But as power within the party shifted from the old guard to younger, more radical officers, Hafiz sided with the former group. When the Military Committee launched its February 23, 1966 coup, they sent a large and well-armed force to his villa in Damascus and a pitched battle ensued. It ended in fifty deaths and Hafiz's surrender. At first, the neo-Ba'th regime imprisoned him, but it later allowed him to leave the country. He initially went to Beirut and then to Baghdad when Iraqi Ba'thists seized power in July 1968.

Since that time, he has been active in various groups seeking to overthrow the regime in Syria.

HAKIM, HASAN AL- (1886-).

Nationalist politician during the French Mandate, member of the Iron Hand Society and the first People's Party, and a close associate of Abd al-Rahman Shahbandar. The French chose him to be prime minister from September 1941 until April 1942. Hakim was a leading independent pro-Hashemite politician in the early years of independence and favored unity with Iraq, Jordan, and Lebanon. He also called for Syria to align itself with the west in the context of the Cold War. In the unstable political climate of Adib al-Shishakli's first two years, governments rose and fell rapidly. With relations between the army and the People's Party deteriorating, Hakim was called upon in August 1951 to form the fifth government in less than two years. The major issue during his brief tenure was whether Syria should participate in a pro-western Middle Eastern defense organization put forward by Great Britain, France, and the United States in October. When his foreign minister bluntly attacked the proposal, the pro-western Hakim could not hold his cabinet together, and he resigned in November.

HAMA.

Biblical name is Hamath. Hama straddles the banks of the Orontes River 54 km north of Homs and 150 km south of Aleppo. It is in a region of orchards and cereal cultivation, and its proximity to the Syrian desert has made it a market town for bedouin throughout history. In medieval times Arab rulers of various dynasties struggled to control the town. It is widely known for its many waterwheels (norias), the greatest of which rises 22 meters above the Orontes to lift water to the city's aqueducts which conduct the water to city homes and outlying fields. Hama's population has greatly increased in the twentieth century, rising from 60,000 in 1930 to about 250,000 today.

Since the Ba'th Party came to power in 1963, Hama has been the center of strong religious opposition because of its special historical relationship with the Alawi countryside to its west. A handful of Sunni families owned most of the lands

of nearby villages and wielded complete economic and political domination over their Alawi inhabitants. The Ba'thist regime promoted secularism and implemented land reform that undermined the basis of landlord domination over the countryside, policies that the city's Sunnis perceived as purposefully inflicting sectarian-class vengeance and attacking Islam's preeminence in Syria. There were demonstrations and violent attacks on the regime in April 1964, and in February 1982 the Muslim Brothers launched a full-scale revolt against the government of Hafiz al-Asad. Government forces killed between 5,000 and 20,000 people and leveled much of the city in two weeks of bitter fighting. The government then rapidly reconstructed the city's devastated portions.

HAMDANID DYNASTY.

From its capital in Aleppo this dynasty ruled over northern and parts of central Syria between 944 and 1016. The Hamdanids came from Jazira, where their ancestral tribe had dwelled since pre-Islamic times. In the early tenth century, the weakness of the Abbasid caliphate in Baghdad facilitated the emergence of several regional dynasties, including the Hamdanids in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul. Like other such powers, the Hamdanids began their rise by keeping order on behalf of the Abbasids, fighting Kharijis, defending against Qarmati raids, and participating in the restoration of Abbasid authority in southern Syria by helping to oust the Tulunids.

The founder of Hamdanid power in northern Syria was Sayf al-Dawla (r. 944-967), younger brother of the Hamdanid ruler in Mosul. In 944, he seized Aleppo and Homs from the Ikhshidids. From Aleppo he led Muslim forces against Byzantine armies encroaching on northern Syria after a hiatus in conflict on that frontier since early Abbasid times more than a century before. In the course of these campaigns, the Byzantines took the offensive a number of times and occupied portions of northern Syria, including Aleppo in 962 and 969. The Christian power raided as far south as Homs and along much of the Syrian littoral (Antioch fell in 969) as far as Tripoli. The Hamdanids thus became de facto tributaries to the Byzantine Empire. In 1016, the last Hamdanid ruler of

Aleppo, little more than a dependent of the Byzantines, fled from Mirdasid forces seeking to avenge the murder of their clansmen. In Islamic history, this short-lived dynasty is famed for its rulers' generous patronage, which attracted a brilliant circle of poets, including al-Mutannabi, philosophers such as al-Farabi, and scientists.

HANANU, IBRAHIM. (1869-1935)

Leader of resistance to the establishment of the French Mandate in northern Syria. He came from a Kurdish landowning family in a rural area near Aleppo. In the Ottoman era he worked in the provincial administration, but he participated in the Arab Revolt against the Ottomans. When the threat of a French invasion loomed, Hananu organized a militia called the League of National Defense, and in the fall of 1919 he launched a revolt in nearby rural districts. His movement depended on support from Turkish nationalist forces fighting the French for control over southeastern Turkey. The revolt crested in late 1920 when large portions of northwest Syria were controlled by Hananu's forces. The tide turned against him, however, in 1921 with the arrival of French reinforcements and the conclusion of the Franklin-Bouillon Agreement between France and Turkey over their conflict. Turkish support then vanished, French forces went on the offensive, Hananu fled to Transjordan, and the revolt was suppressed.

When he returned to Syria, he became a leader of the National Bloc's radical Aleppan faction. In 1928 Hananu was elected to the constituent assembly and was named chairman of the committee to draft the constitution. When France promulgated a constitution that excluded articles strengthening Syrian self-rule, Hananu strenuously opposed all moves to cooperate on the basis of what he considered an illegal document. In particular, he rejected Bloc chief Jamil Mardam's tactic of "honorable cooperation" and engineered Mardam's resignation as prime minister rather than sign a treaty that compromised on Syrian unity. Hananu directed the Bloc's Aleppan faction until his death in 1935.

HARIRI, ZIYAD AL-

General Hariri was a key figure in the March 8, 1963 coup that toppled the eighteen-month secessionist regime that followed the United Arab Republic. A brother-in-law of Akram al-Hawrani, Hariri did not belong to any political party, but he cooperated with Ba'thist and Nasirist officers in the coup. His purpose in seizing power was to reestablish the UAR, but the Ba'thist officers were completely against such a move. The Ba'thist Military Committee maneuvered to consolidate its power, but the existence of units loyal to Hariri demanded caution in getting rid of the general. An opportunity arose when he traveled to Algeria in June. The Military Committee and Minister of Interior Amin al-Hafiz forced some thirty of Hariri's officer allies to retire, so that when he returned, the National Revolutionary Command Council was able to remove Hariri as Chief of Staff of the armed forces. On 8 July 1963 Hariri left Syria for exile in France.

HASANI, TAJ AL-DIN AL- (1890-1943).

This prominent politician of the French Mandate era cooperated with the French and opposed the nationalists. The French rewarded him by appointing him prime minister in 1928 in preparation for elections to a constituent assembly, and he lasted in office until 1932. The French again designated Hasani prime minister in 1934, following the failure of negotiations with the National Bloc on terms of a Franco-Syrian Treaty. Less than two years later, though, Hasani had to resign during the 1936 General Strike, which forced France to return nationalists to government. His last moment in the limelight came after the Free French-British invasion during World War II. On this occasion, the French appointed him president in October 1941, but he had so little credibility by that time that it was difficult for nationalist cabinets to work with him. His fall from office in January 1943 preceded the nationalists' vindication in elections by six months.

HASHEMITES.

A family of religious dignitaries originally from Mecca. They rose to prominence in modern Arab history during World War I when the Hashemite sharif of Mecca,

Husayn ibn Ali launched the Arab Revolt against Ottoman rule in 1916. His ambition was to establish Hashemite rule over Arabia, Syria, and Iraq. Husayn's son Faysal established a short-lived kingdom in Syria between 1918 and 1920, and then set up a monarchy in Iraq that lasted from 1921 until 1958. Abdallah, another of Husayn's sons, established a second Hashemite regime in Transjordan that has lasted from 1921 to the present. Abdallah aspired to add Syria to his kingdom throughout the French Mandate era. He supported Sultan al-Atrash's 1925 to 1927 revolt, in the course of which he developed strong ties with the Druzes, who thereafter tended to favor his ambitions. Among mandate-era Arab nationalists, Abd al-Rahman Shahbandar led pro-Hashemite forces in Syria. When Syria gained independence, the Hashemite rulers of Jordan and Iraq sought to establish their authority over Syria through a variety of unity schemes. Saudi Arabia and Egypt consistently and successfully opposed these plans. The fall of the Hashemite monarchy in Iraq in July 1958 sharply reduced the family's power as it left Jordan the sole remaining possession.

HAWRAN.

The region in southern Syria located between Jabal Druze and the Golan Heights. Its economy is based on the cultivation of cereals because the area receives a fair amount of annual rainfall and cultivators can exploit abundant springs. The Hawran is a main source of grain for Damascus. Its main town is Dar'a, with a population of about 50,000.

HAWRANI, AKRAM AL- (1914-1996).

Populist politician from a prominent Sunni family in Hama, he initiated Syria's first major peasant movement and played an important role in giving the Ba'th Party a popular base. During the French Mandate, Hawrani led a local youth movement and tried to coordinate its activities with the Syrian Social National Party. In the early 1930s he belonged to the pan-Arab League of National Action. In addition to such party activities, Hawrani showed a bent for dramatic action, as when he rushed to Iraq to back a 1941 anti-British revolt. Two years later he was elected to the Syrian parliament where he

opposed the National Bloc for its indifference to social and economic issues. At the same time, he began to mobilize peasants around Hama in a movement against big landowners. Hawrani's penchant for direct action gained him further notoriety in 1945 when he and two officers, including future dictator Adib al-Shishakli, seized the citadel in Hama from French forces.

In the early independence period, he founded the Arab Socialist Party, drifted from the SSNP, and developed ties with young army officers. When the Palestine War of 1948 erupted, he enlisted with irregular forces that attacked Jewish settlements. In 1949, Hawrani initially helped establish Husni al-Za'im's regime, but moved into opposition when the colonel designated a member of a large landowning family his prime minister. During the Sami al-Hinnawi regime, Hawrani served as minister of agriculture, but he conspired with Adib al-Shishakli against Hinnawi when it appeared that the elected government might vote for union with Iraq, a move he opposed because of his strong republican sentiments. After Shishakli's December 1949 coup, he became minister of defense. He and Shishakli came from Hama and had similar early political tendencies, so for a time Shishakli permitted Hawrani to organize attacks on landowner families in central Syria and to hold an "anti-feudal" rally of peasants in Aleppo. The two men had a falling out following the colonel's November 1951 abolition of civilian government and Hawrani fled to Lebanon. He met with Michel Aflaq and Salah al-Din al-Bitar in Beirut and they agreed to merge his party with the Ba'th Party, thereby bringing his following among army officers and peasants into the ranks of the Ba'th's supporters. It was in large measure thanks to Hawrani's popular base that the Ba'th Party won 22 seats in the 1954 elections held after Shishakli's overthrow.

As Syrian politics veered left in the next three years, Hawrani's influence increased, partly because of his informal alliance with the independent Khalid al-Azm and Syrian Communist Party leader Khalid Bakdash. By early 1958 Hawrani favored the establishment of the United Arab Republic and indeed he joined its cabinet as one of four vice

presidents, and in November 1958 became minister of justice. But as Egyptian President Gamal Abd al-Nasir limited the scope of his and other Ba'thists' roles in government, Hawrani became disenchanted with the union experiment, resigned from the government at the end of 1959, and retired to Hama, nursing deep resentment at Egyptian domination of the UAR. He signed a public manifesto in support of the September 1961 secessionist coup that ended the UAR and successfully ran for parliament, where he defended the land reform legislation passed under the UAR against proposals to soften their impact on large landholders. His bitter public criticism of Nasir and the UAR indicated his growing differences with the Ba'th's leadership, and on 20 June 1962, he formally left the party and revived the Arab Socialist Party. He has had no links with the Ba'thist regimes that have ruled Syria since 1963, spending most of his life outside the country since then.

HINDAWI AFFAIR.

Nizar Hindawi was a young Jordanian who attempted to plant a bomb on an Israeli civilian aircraft at London's Heathrow Airport on 17 April 1986. An Israeli security guard discovered the explosive in a false bottom of a piece of luggage carried by Hindawi's girlfriend (who was by all accounts unaware of the bag's contents). In his confession to British authorities, Hindawi directly implicated the head of Syrian air force intelligence and employees of Syria's national airline. Hindawi recanted at his trial in October, but a jury found him guilty and sentenced him to a forty-five-year jail term. At the announcement of the verdict, Britain formally cut relations with Syria. The United States and Canada withdrew their ambassadors, while the European Community imposed political and economic sanctions. For several months Syria endured its worst diplomatic isolation since the neo-Ba'th regime of the 1960s. Asad began to break down the diplomatic quarantine when he closed down the offices of the notorious Abu Nidal terrorist group in June 1987. The following month, the European Community withdrew its sanctions. Relations with the United States also improved, but Britain did not restore ties until November 1990, after Syria joined the anti-Iraq coalition in Desert Shield.

HINNAWI, SAMI AL- (1898-1950).

Leader of Syria's second military coup of 1949. Born in Aleppo, Hinnawi joined the Troupes Spéciales in 1927. He overthrew and executed Husni al-Za'im on 14 August. Unlike his predecessor, Hinnawi immediately designated a civilian government headed by Hashim al-Atasi and crowded with members of the Aleppo-based, pro-Hashemite People's Party such as Nazim al-Qudsi. He also appointed to the cabinet such leftist politicians as Akram al-Hawrani and Ba'th Party leader Michel Aflaq. Colonel Hinnawi handed the civilian government the task of conducting national elections to a constituent assembly. Elections for 114 seats were held on 15 November 1949, and the People's Party won forty-five seats, while forty seats went to independents; the Ba'th Party won just one seat in Dayr al-Zur. Supporters of union with Iraq, backed by Hinnawi, hoped that the constituent assembly would fashion a document to facilitate such a union. Opponents of union feared just that prospect. Hinnawi was deposed on 19 December by anti-Hashemite officers led by Colonel Adib al-Shishakli, imprisoned until September 1950, and assassinated in Beirut on 31 October by a cousin of former prime minister Muhsin al-Barazi, who had been executed at Hinnawi's orders a year earlier.

HISN AL-AKRAD.

The best-preserved castle from the era of the Crusades, it is situated at the southern end of Jabal Ansariyya and dominates the Homs Gap between Tripoli and Tartus on the Mediterranean and Homs. The castle covers an area of 2.5 hectares and stands 300 meters above the surrounding Buqay'a plain. It had been the site of a fortress since ancient times, and in the eleventh century the Mirdasid dynasty of Aleppo settled Kurdish troops there, hence the Arabic name "Fortress of the Kurds."

In 1099, Raymond of St.-Gilles briefly occupied Hisn alAkrad, but it was taken over by Tancred of Antioch in 1110. The Crusaders incorporated it into a network of fortresses designed to defend against Muslim attack that might strike at the County of Tripoli from the northeast. The knights used flares and signals to communicate with nearby castles. In

1142, the Order of the Hospitallers took control of Hisn alAkrad. Saladin's attempt to seize it in 1188 was repulsed. A series of earthquakes at the turn of the thirteenth century damaged the castle, and the present structure dates from repairs and enlargements constructed after those tremors. The Crusader knights resisted several Muslim attempts to expel them in the early thirteenth century, but the Mamluk Sultan Baybars laid siege in late 1270 and overwhelmed the defenders in April 1271.

HOMS.

In Arabic Hims, in Latin Emesa; a central Syrian city on the eastern bank of the Orontes River. Several factors make Homs the major city on the route between Damascus and Aleppo. It is at the eastern end of the Homs Gap, a pass between Jabal Ansariyya and the Lebanon mountains that leads from Tripoli to the Syrian interior. Because of the Gap, the area around Homs receives much more rainfall than interior regions to its north and south. Thus, the city is in the midst of a cultivated region (crops include wheat, barley, lentils, cotton, sugar beets, vines), as well as serving as a point of exchange between the sedentary economy and that of the desert. Moreover, because of easy access to the Mediterranean Sea, Homs has attracted overland trade from the Persian Gulf, just as in recent history an oil pipeline from northern Iraq passed through Homs on its way to Tripoli and Baniyas (Syria's major oil refinery is in Homs). Furthermore, Homs is roughly halfway between Aleppo and Damascus, so it participates in trade with and between these centers.

Homs may have been founded by the Seleucids. During Roman times, the city contributed two emperors, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus and his successor Alexander Severus. Umayyad rulers based in Damascus used Homs to launch military campaigns against the Byzantines, but with the rise of the Abbasids and the shift of imperial power to Baghdad, Homs declined in status. The city suffered several Byzantine occupations and much destruction in the late tenth century. During the era of the Crusades, the atabegs and Ayyubids turned Homs into a major staging point for campaigns against

the Franks. In modern times, the city's population has grown from 50,000 in 1912 to nearly 500,000 today.

HOMS, BATTLE OF.

In 1281, the Mongols launched their largest and best-prepared invasion of Mamluk-ruled Syria. A Mongol force of 80,000 engaged a Mamluk army of unknown size just outside of Homs. From Muslim chronicles it appears that the Mamluks were on the verge of defeat when their field commander cleverly devised a ruse to allow his forces to outmaneuver the Mongols and attack their main force from the rear, thereby turning the battle into a rout. While this was not the last Mongol incursion into Syria, it was in certain respects the most decisive one in that the Mamluks demonstrated their ability to defeat a large, well-organized Mongol offensive. Thus, the Battle of Homs contributed to the legitimacy of Mamluk rule in Syria at the beginning of its third decade.

HUSAYN IBN ALI, SHARIF (c. 1853-1931).

Chief religious dignitary of Mecca who organized the 1916 Arab Revolt against the Ottoman Empire and head of the Hashemite clan in the early twentieth century.

"Sharif" was the title of the local *amirs*, or princes, who claimed descent from the Prophet Muhammad and shared power with the Ottoman governor. Their primary responsibility was to act as custodians of the Meccan shrine and ensure the proper conduct of the pilgrimage. Husayn became the sharif of Mecca in November 1908, at the same time that Istanbul was seeking to establish firmer control over the empire's provinces. For his part, Sharif Husayn strove to balance Mecca's traditional autonomy with support for the Ottomans against rebellions in western Arabia. His ambition to secure his status in the holy city eventually blossomed into a plan for an Arab kingdom independent of the Ottoman Empire.

In February 1914, he had his son Abdallah contact British officials in Cairo to seek their support in case the Ottomans should try to remove him. Later that year, the Ottomans entered World War I against Great Britain, and Husayn explored further the possibility of British support for his position as an independent Arab ruler. There ensued a

series of exchanges known as the Husayn-McMahon Correspondence that laid the foundation for the Arab Revolt. The sharif hoped to establish an Arab kingdom over Arabia, Syria, and Iraq. By the end of the war he realized his ambition of becoming king of Hijaz, western Arabia including the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, and his son Faysal established a short-lived government in Syria. But the French drove Faysal out of Syria in 1920, and four years later the rising Saudi state of central Arabia drove Husayn out of his kingdom. He died in Amman, Transjordan, in 1931.

HUSAYN-MCMAHON CORRESPONDENCE.

Series of letters exchanged between Sharif Husayn ibn Ali and Sir Henry McMahon, British High Commissioner in Egypt, between July 1915 and March 1916. In this exchange, Husayn sought a British commitment to support the creation of an independent Arab kingdom that would encompass the Ottoman Arab provinces east of Egypt. The British wanted Husayn to launch an Arab Revolt that would sap Ottoman power (Britain and the Ottoman Empire were World War I adversaries) and dilute Muslim sympathy for the empire's war efforts.

The correspondents failed to agree on the extent of the proposed Arab kingdom because Britain had to consider her ally France's ambition to establish a sphere of influence over Syria. As a result, McMahon explicitly excluded coastal Syria, the districts west of Aleppo, Hama, Homs, and Damascus, roughly from Alexandretta to Beirut. Nonetheless, Sharif Husayn proceeded to launch the Arab Revolt in June 1916. After the war, the British acquiesced to France's demand to control all of Syria, an act that Arabs have always considered to be a violation of Britain's pledges in the Husayn-McMahon correspondence to support an independent Arab kingdom. See HASHEMITES, SYKES-PICOT ACCORD.

I

IBN TAYMIYYA, TAQI AL-DIN AHMAD (1263-1328).

A renowned religious scholar whose intellectual influence

resonates in the twentieth-century Muslim world. He was born in Harran (in present-day Turkey), but his family had to flee in 1269 because of the Mongol threat, and they settled in Mamluk Damascus, where Ibn Taymiyya spent most of his life. He entered into many religious controversies and gained a popular following for his exhortations to participate in jihad against the Mongols and the Twelver Shi'is in Lebanon. On a number of occasions, rival ulama incited the Mamluk authorities against him, and he endured several periods of imprisonment in Cairo and Damascus. In fact, he died a prisoner in the citadel of Damascus.

Ibn Taymiyya wrote prolifically in several fields of Islamic scholarship, particularly theology, law, doctrine, and heresiography. The modern revival of his teachings stems from the Wahhabi movement's adoption of his views in the eighteenth century, then the salafiyya movement's propagation of them. Today his works are widely popular throughout the Arab world among Islamist groups.

IBRAHIM PASHA (1789-1848).

Leader of Egyptian forces that invaded and occupied Syria from 1831 to 1832. His previous military achievements included the subjugation of rebels in Upper Egypt to the rule of his father, Muhammad Ali, and in quelling anti-Ottoman revolts in Arabia and Greece. He commanded Egyptian forces invading Palestine in November 1831 and took Damascus on 2 June 1832. The following month his troops routed Ottoman forces at a battle near Homs. Soon after that, all of Syria was under Egyptian rule and the Ottomans formally recognized Muhammad Ali's authority in May 1833 in return for annual tribute.

The powerful Egyptian army, modeled on early nineteenth-century European armies, brought a higher degree of security and order to the Syrian countryside, particularly in curbing the bedouin. The Egyptian occupation also improved the status of Syrian Christians, included their representatives in local consultative councils, and even designated Christians to head the councils in Damascus and Aleppo. Such measures fostered a climate more favorable to European commerce, and in 1833 Ibrahim allowed the establishment of a British

consulate in Damascus, thereby facilitating an increase in trade with Europe. The Egyptian regime also encouraged economic growth by introducing new crops, extending the margins of cultivation, and providing assistance to peasants. Furthermore, Ibrahim promoted education by creating primary and secondary schools, setting up military colleges in Damascus, Aleppo, and Antioch, and allowing more mission schools.

In general Ibrahim Pasha tried to reproduce in Syria the strong central authority his father had imposed on Egypt. This entailed the reorganization and centralization of administration, regular taxation, conscription, and disarming the population. The imposition of a head tax galled Muslims, who considered such a tax equivalent to the traditional levy on Christians and Jews. Uprisings against these measures erupted among Druze in the south and Alawis in the northwest. Discontent among Sunni townsmen swirled around the Egyptians' favorable treatment of Christians. Finally, all Syrians resented the heavy new taxes introduced by the Egyptians to pay for the stationing of their large army of occupation. Encouraged by local revolts, the Ottomans resumed war against Ibrahim Pasha in June 1839, but he defeated them yet again. This time, however, an alliance of European powers intervened to compel Ibrahim to evacuate Syria. In return, the Ottomans offered to designate Muhammad Ali the hereditary governor of Egypt. Ibrahim Pasha personally led the Egyptian withdrawal in the closing days of 1840 and Ottoman rule was restored to Syria.

IMAM.

An Arabic term for the leader of Muslim congregational prayer, it also has special connotations for Shi'i Muslims. In their usage, the imam is the legitimate spiritual and political head of the Muslim community. They regard Ali ibn Abi Talib as the first imam and his male descendants as successors to that status. In the first three Islamic centuries, divisions among Shi'is stemmed from disagreement over the identity of the imam, particularly following the death of the sixth imam, Ja'far al-Sadiq. From these differences arose a variety of Shi'i sects, including the Twelvers, Isma'ilis, Nizaris, and

Qarmatis, as well as offshoots of Shi'ism such as the Druzes and the Alawis.

INDUSTRY.

Historically, Syria's major industry consisted of cotton, wool, and silk textiles manufactured in Aleppo, Damascus, Homs, and Hama. Artisans manufactured both luxury cloths and ordinary textiles for use as clothing and household furnishings. Metal, glass, and leather products were also important in traditional industry. Modern industry appeared in the late 1920s in the fields of cement, textiles, and food processing. Forty years later, Syrian industry was still concentrated in textiles, processed foods, soap, matches, glass, and cement.

Nationalizations by the Ba'th Party regime in 1964 and 1965 discouraged private investment, but after 1970 the Hafiz al-Asad regime allowed foreign participation and increased its own investment in industrial development. Consequently, during the 1970s, industry grew fairly rapidly at around 13 percent per year. New industrial enterprises in the 1980s included oil refineries, fertilizers, cement, and paper. In the field of food processing, new investments in sugar refineries led to higher output. To the older cement factories in Aleppo and Hama, Syria added two new ones in Tartus and Adra around 1980, allowing a doubling of production. Phosphate deposits are present in the desert near Palmyra, and a phosphate fertilizer plant was built near Homs to exploit this resource. Phosphate plants in the Homs region produce fertilizer for domestic consumption and export. An indication of the growing importance of industry in the economy is the increase in its share of the labor force from 20 percent in 1965 to 30 percent in 1990.

IRAN.

Relations with Iran were of secondary importance to both countries during Syria's first few decades of independence. When Mohammed Reza Shah ruled Iran, he adopted a decidedly pro-western foreign policy that included warm ties with the United States and official relations with Israel, to which he sold oil. Bilateral relations assumed greater importance after the 1978-1979 Iranian revolution brought to

power an Islamic regime opposed to American influence in the Middle East and avowedly hostile to Israel.

When Iraq invaded Iran in September 1980, Syria took the side of non-Arab Iran against the rival Ba'thist regime of Baghdad. President Hafiz al-Asad's policy isolated Syria in the Arab world, but it brought tangible benefits for his regime, primarily preferential deals for Iranian oil imports. Observers pointed out the ostensible anomaly of a close relationship between the Islamic Republic of Iran, avowedly dedicated to spreading Islamic revolution, and Ba'thist Syria, a secular regime combating an Islamist insurgency led by the Muslim Brothers. Indeed, a delegation of Syrian Muslim Brothers visited Tehran and met with Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, requesting that he support their struggle to overthrow Asad's regime. But despite the Islamic Republic's greater ideological affinity with the Muslim Brothers than with the Ba'th Party, Khomeini maintained a pragmatic foreign policy toward Syria, and the Muslim Brothers were left to draw the conclusion that they were victims of a Shi'i plot.

The Lebanese War of 1982 further strengthened SyrianIranian relations. During the war, Syria permitted Iranian Revolutionary Guards to establish bases in the Bekaa Valley and to organize Lebanese Shi'is into the Hizballah movement, which became a potent force in Lebanon's politics and military struggle against the Israeli occupation of southern Lebanon. There was a certain irony in Syria's facilitating the establishment of an Islamic party in Lebanon at the same time the regime was battling Islamists at home, but Asad calculated that he could keep the two spheres separate. Hizballah's antiwestern actions suited Asad's strategy in Lebanon during the 1980s when he confronted an Israeli-American bid to exclude Syria from Lebanon's political recovery. Since Israel and the United States abandoned their ambitions, friction between Syria and Hizballah has intermittently strained Syria's relations with Iran. Asad wants to contain Hizballah's influence to proportions that allow it to continue fighting Israeli troops stationed in southern Lebanon while not posing a challenge to the fragile Lebanese political balance he has fashioned since 1990. Hizballah is financially dependent on Iran, and Iran's

access to Lebanon is dependent on Syria, so ultimately Asad holds the keys to Hizballah's fortunes.

IRAQ.

During the first decade of Syria's independence, Iraq's rulers sought to establish dominance in the Arab East by drawing Syria into their orbit. Iraqi leaders courted Syrian politicians, in particular the pro-Iraqi People's Party, and provided them with funds to boost their status in the Syrian political arena. Iraqi intrigue contributed to the downfalls of Husni al-Za'im and Adib al-Shishakli, but pro-Iraqi politicians were never able to bring about unity between the two countries. France, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia all opposed such a union, while Great Britain was cool to the notion.

In the fall of 1963, the Ba'th Party regimes in Iraq and Syria proposed a union of the two countries. But this proved abortive because on 18 November a military coup removed the Ba'th from power in Iraq. Five years later, the Ba'th Party again seized power in Iraq, but the Iraqi Ba'th represented the faction that was loyal to Michel Aflaq and that had been violently driven from power in Syria by the February 23, 1966 coup. Thus two hostile factions of the same party inherited the pattern of troubled relations between Damascus and Baghdad. Notwithstanding the ideological and personal animosities between the two regimes, during the October 1973 war Iraq sent two armored divisions and infantry units to support Syrian troops fighting Israel in the Golan Heights. But when Syria agreed to a cease-fire, the Iraqis withdrew their forces to indicate their disapproval. Relations deteriorated again in 1975 in a dispute over Euphrates River water, then briefly improved when Egypt made peace with Israel three years later. There were even new moves toward unity in late 1978 and early 1979, but they halted following the rise to power of Saddam Husayn in Baghdad in July 1979 and the accusation that Syria was plotting to subvert the government.

In September 1980, Iraq invaded Iran in a bid to overthrow the newly established Islamic Republic that Baghdad's leaders accused of subversion. Syria immediately criticized Iraq for diverting Arab resources from the

confrontation with Israel, and in retaliation Iraq severed relations. April 1982 saw the final steps in the road to a break between Syria and Iraq: Syria closed the border, then shut down the Iraqi-Syrian Pipeline, and finally severed diplomatic relations on 18 April. When Iraq emerged victorious at war's end in July 1988, Saddam Husayn sought to punish Asad for supporting Iran. He did this by sending arms to General Michel Aoun, who at the time was seeking to expel Syria from Lebanon.

When Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990, Asad struck back at Saddam by siding with the United States and its Arab coalition partners, who invited western intervention to expel the Iraqis. In September, Syria sent 20,000 troops to Saudi Arabia, ostensibly to defend the kingdom against Iraqi attack. These troops did not participate in the assault on Iraq, but for a time it appeared that the Iraqi threat would lead to a permanent joint force of Syrian and Egyptian troops to defend the Gulf Arab states. The Saudis and Kuwaitis, however, decided against a permanent Arab military presence and sent the Syrian soldiers home. Since the war, Syria has maintained its long-held stance against Saddam Husayn's regime.

IRAQI-SYRIAN PIPELINE.

Delivered oil from Kirkuk in northern Iraq to the central Syrian town of Homs, and from there to the Mediterranean ports of Baniyas in Syria and Tripoli in Lebanon. From 1968 to 1973, Iraq and Syria bickered over the latter's demand for a large increase in the transit fee. This led the Iraqis to develop alternative pipelines to Turkey and the Gulf. In April 1976 Iraq stopped sending oil through the pipeline and left it shut for nearly three years. After Syria sided with Iran against Iraq in the Gulf War, she closed the pipeline on 10 April 1982.

IRON HAND SOCIETY.

The first nationalist group to emerge in Damascus under the French Mandate. It was led by Abd al-Rahman Shahbandar, who organized its spread to Homs and Hama. In Aleppo a similar organization called the Red Hand Society also agitated against French rule. The French arrested

Shahbandar and other members in 1922 and suppressed the society.

ISMA'ILI.

A Shi'i Muslim sect whose members have long lived in parts of central Syria in the vicinity of Hama and in Latakia province. Its members account for about 1.5 percent of the population. This Shi'i sect gave rise to several important movements and dynasties in the tenth and eleventh centuries, including the Fatimids, Nizaris, and Qarmatis. The Isma'ilis differed with other Shi'is over succession to the sixth imam, Ja'far al-Sadiq, who died in 765. Some of Ja'far's followers believed that he had designated his son Isma'il to succeed him, but Isma'il predeceased his father, and Isma'il's party then split into two groups. The first held that the line of imams had ended with Isma'il, that he was still alive, and that he would return as the *mahdi*, the messianic figure in popular Islam who would inaugurate a millennial reign of justice. The second party believed that Isma'il's son Muhammad was the true imam. When he died his followers divided into two more sects. Some paid allegiance to Muhammad as the last imam, who would return as the mahdi. This group became the Qarmatis. Others supported the claim of a certain Ubayd Allah that he was a direct descendant of Muhammad ibn Isma'il and the rightful imam. This figure established the Fatimid movement, which founded a dynasty in North Africa in 909, and later conquered Egypt and Syria. In the late eleventh century a schism arose in Fatimid Isma'ilism when the Nizaris broke away and founded their own state based in Iran and with loyal bases scattered in parts of central Syria.

In early modern times a few thousand Isma'ilis were concentrated in villages in Jabal Ansariyya, particularly near the ancient fortresses of Qadmus and Masyaf. Endemic feuding with the more numerous Alawis of the region constituted a permanent threat to their prospects in that part of Syria. In 1849, the Ottoman authorities encouraged the Isma'ilis to emigrate to the district of Salamiyya, 30 km southeast of Hama. In medieval times the town had served as one of the sect's strongholds, and in the nineteenth century it became the center of a new Isma'ili region as immigrants from

Jabal Ansariyya settled and revived villages east and west of Salamiyya. By 1940, Isma'ilis in the vicinity of Salamiyya numbered 16,000 compared with only 4,000 remaining in the mountains. Today 40,000 Isma'ilis live in Salamiyya district and 15,000 live in the mountains.

ISRAEL.

Much of Syria's history since 1948 has been deeply affected by the formation of a Jewish state in Palestine. Syrian troops participated in the Palestine War of 1948, but the small and poorly equipped army could do no more than occupy territory that France and Great Britain had attached to Palestine in 1920, but that Syria considered her own. With the conclusion of the Armistice of 1949, Syria and Israel agreed to designate the disputed territories demilitarized zones whose ultimate possession would be determined in later negotiations. Israel, however, pursued its claim to the DMZs by gradually taking them over by force. Syria resisted such moves, and armed clashes became commonplace. While Syrian leaders often called for reversing the verdict of the 1948 war, Israel's military superiority induced a cautious policy of containing conflict to small-scale fighting in the DMZs.

Such prudent policy, however, was abandoned under the Ba'th Party regimes of the 1960s. Indeed, the neo-Ba'th regime adopted a provocative stance because some of its members favored a "people's war" modeled on the Algerian war for independence against France and the Vietnamese war against the United States. The June 1967 war erupted in the wake of a crisis generated by Syria's confrontations with Israel over the DMZ. Syria lost the Golan Heights to Israeli forces in the fighting, so the issue at stake grew from disputes over the slivers of land in the DMZ to the much larger and far more strategically valuable Golan. United Nations Resolution 242 provided for Syria's recovery of its territory in exchange for peace with Israel, but the neo-Ba'th regime flatly rejected the resolution.

The corrective movement brought Hafiz al-Asad to power in November 1970. He had been minister of defense during the 1967 war, so he had additional personal motivation to retrieve Syria's lost territory. To pursue this aim, Asad

allied with Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and launched the October 1973 war, in which Syrian forces briefly regained much of the Golan Heights, but then lost them and more territory to an Israeli counteroffensive. After the war, Syria and Israel accepted American mediation that led to a 1974 disengagement of forces and the stationing of United Nations observers in a buffer zone. Since then, no fighting between Syria and Israel has taken place on that front. Moreover, in 1975 Asad indicated his willingness to negotiate a peace treaty, but Israelis mistrusted Syrian intentions and therefore showed little interest in exchanging land for peace. Israelis, for their part, regarded the continued occupation of at least part of the Heights as a necessary strategic buffer against any possible future Syrian attack.

Syria's position vis-a-vis Israel notably weakened when Egypt signed a separate peace treaty in 1978, making it possible for Israel to concentrate its formidable military might on its northern front. Syria then embarked on a massive arms buildup that lasted well into the 1980s and put a drag on the economy. The next major development was the Lebanese War of 1982. In June 1982, Israeli forces invaded Lebanon in an attempt to eliminate the Palestine Liberation Organization and bring Lebanon into Israel's sphere of influence. Israeli forces attacked Syrian units stationed in eastern Lebanon but failed to dislodge them, and the two sides agreed to a cease-fire after a few days. For the next three years, Syria and Israel struggled to gain supremacy in Lebanon in the war's aftermath, and Syria prevailed, but the stalemate over the Golan Heights continued.

The first real breakthrough in diplomacy took place as a result of Syria's participation in the coalition to evict Iraq from Kuwait and the rapid decline of the Soviet Union. A few months after the conclusion of Desert Storm, President Asad dropped his insistence that the United Nations oversee negotiations and accepted the United States' invitation to attend an international peace conference to be held in Madrid in December 1991, and then to enter direct negotiations with Israel in Washington. Four years of Syrian-Israeli peace talks have brought little progress to resolving their conflict.

Syria insists on recovering all of the Golan Heights in return for a peace treaty, while the Israeli leadership has agreed to return Syrian territory but has not pledged to undertake a full withdrawal.

ISTIQLAL PARTY.

Arab nationalist party, whose name means independence, established by members of al-Fatat and al-Ahd during Amir Faysal's short-lived regime. It was intended to serve as a public organization while al-Fatat remained a secret group. The party called for the independence and unity of the Arab lands under a constitutional monarchy that would reign over a federation of autonomous regions. Its members included men who rose to preeminence during the French Mandate era, including Jamil Mardam and Shukri al-Quwwatli. In the early years of the mandate era, the Istiqlal Party was a rival of Abd al-Rahman Shahbandar's People's Party.

J

JABAL ANSARIYYA.

Also known as Jabal al-Nusayriya and Jabal al-Alawi, this range in northwestern Syria has an average height of 1,200 meters with a highest peak (Nabi Yunus) of 1,600 meters. The western slopes facing the Mediterranean Sea receive enough rainfall to support agriculture and have a slight enough incline to allow for intensive cultivation and dense settlement. The steeper and drier eastern slopes are more sparsely inhabited. Much of the population of the Ansariyya Range has long been primarily Alawi, but there are a fair number of Christian and a few Isma'ili villages as well. Until recent decades, the Alawi peasants of the mountain were dominated by wealthy Sunni townsmen of Hama and Latakia.

Throughout history, the rugged terrain of Jabal Ansariyya has made it difficult for outsiders to rule it directly. The Ottoman Empire began to assert central authority more effectively in the last decades of the nineteenth century. When Ottoman rule ended in 1918, autonomist tendencies appeared in Shaykh Salih al-Ali's revolt, and French Mandate policies

reinforced them by creating an administration separate from the rest of Syria. From 1936 to 1939, Jabal Ansariyya was ruled by a national government in Damascus, then France granted it separate status from 1939 to 1942. When Syria became independent in 1946, Sulayman al-Murshid led an autonomist movement that the government quickly suppressed. Since that time, the region has been an integral part of Syria.

JABAL DRUZE.

Rugged region east of the Hawran in southern Syria, it is an elevated volcanic plateau. Its eastern portion consists of a maze of lava flows, hills, and caves that have made it an ideal refuge for political dissenters, as indicated by its Arabic name *al-laja'*, which means refuge. In the seventeenth century, Druzes came from Lebanon to settle. For most of the three centuries of Druze settlement there, they guarded their autonomy against outside domination. In a process similar to the case of Jabal Ansariyya, the Ottoman Empire increased its authority in the later nineteenth century. The French Mandate accorded Jabal Druze separate status, but the meddling of French authorities turned the region into the center of the Great Revolt of 1925-1927. More recently Jabal Druze was the site of Syria's first oil discovery. The district's present population is 90 percent Druze and 10 percent Christian, mostly Greek Orthodox.

JABIRI, SA'DALLAH AL- (1893-1947).

From one of Aleppo's leading families, he was active in Arab nationalist politics in the late Ottoman era, a participant in Ibrahim Hananu's revolt, and a prominent nationalist leader during the French Mandate. In 1922 Jabiri organized the Red Hand, a shortlived nationalist movement modeled on the Iron Hand Society based in Damascus. The French arrested and exiled Jabiri for his role in the Great Revolt of 1925-1927, but granted him amnesty in 1928. When the National Bloc formed its executive leadership in 1932, Jabiri became its vice president and a leader of one of Aleppo's factions in the Bloc. He served in the 1936-1938 cabinet of Jamil Mardam and became prime minister of independent Syria's first elected government in August 1943.

Jabiri proved incapable of governing the country in a manner that would have strengthened its fledgling parliamentary system. Graft and nepotism were rampant; the government harassed its critics with arrests, suspensions of newspapers, and bans on their organizations. He resigned in October 1944, but became prime minister again the following October. During his second tenure, in May 1946, Jabiri obtained extraconstitutional powers to issue decrees, such as one to eliminate independent oversight of the accounts of government departments, and his parliamentary bloc rammed through measures without regard for proper procedure. Moreover, the government used the gendarmerie to keep officials and parliamentary deputies under surveillance. Finally, feuding among cabinet members and his own declining health prompted President Shukri al-Quwwatli and Interior Minister Sabri al-Asali to induce Jabiri to resign in December 1946, six months before his death.

JACOBITE. See SYRIAN ORTHODOX.

JADID, SALAH AL- (1926-1993).

Dominant figure in the neo-Ba'thist regime of 1966 to 1970. An Alawi from Jabla, a small town south of Latakia, Jadid's first political involvement was with the Syrian Social National Party and then the Ba'th Party. He was a founding member of the Military Committee that formed in Egypt in 1959. In the first Ba'thist regime of 1963 to 1966, Jadid became chief of the Officers' Bureau and the Personnel Branch, positions that gave him the authority to dismiss, transfer, and appoint officers. He used these positions to entrench members of the Military Committee in key commands, including Hafiz al-Asad as commander of the Air Force and Muhammad Umran as commander of a key armored brigade stationed near Damascus. Jadid also engineered a purge of Sunni officers, whom he replaced with Alawi, Druze, and Isma'ili men. In December 1964, Jadid was promoted to chief of staff and became the leading figure in the Military Committee's struggle against the party old guard in 1965 to 1966. It was Jadid who

planned the February 23, 1966 coup that brought the neoBa'th to power.

In the neo-Ba'thist regime, Jadid was the most powerful figure, but he satisfied himself with a modest official position as assistant secretary-general of the Ba'th Party's Regional Command. He supported the regime's radical economic measures and its sponsoring of Palestinian raids against Israel. After Syria's defeat in the June 1967 war, Jadid and Asad became rivals for power as Asad took effective control of the armed forces while Jadid remained the master of the party. When a climactic clash occurred in November 1970, Asad easily prevailed, arresting Jadid and throwing him into prison, where he died in August 1993.

JAMAL PASHA, AHMAD (1872-1922).

A member of the Committee of Union and Progress ruling triumvirate that dominated Ottoman politics from 1912 until 1918. In 1914, he arrived in Syria as governor and commander of the Ottoman Fourth Army to defend Syria against British forces stationed in Egypt that threatened to invade Syria during World War I. Jamal ordered a massive conscription of Syrian manpower for military service and to build military roads and railways. In February 1915, he launched a surprise attack on British forces defending the Suez Canal, but the campaign stalled. He tried again a year later, but British defenses again held their lines.

One of Jamal Pasha's main concerns was to stamp out any sign of disloyalty among Syrians active in the nascent Arab nationalist movement. Most prominent Syrians were disposed to support the empire during the war; others were easily coopted; those he suspected of disloyalty, he exiled to Asia Minor. In April and May 1916, Jamal Pasha ordered the execution of twenty-one Arab nationalists in Beirut and Damascus. As a result, he is known in Arab nationalist historiography as a ruthless tyrant. He remained responsible for Syria's defense until the middle of 1917 when a German general took command; in early 1918, Istanbul recalled Jamal Pasha from Syria. At the end of the war, he fled to Germany and then traveled to Afghanistan, where he assisted the

government's drive to modernize its army. In the meantime, the Ottoman government court-martialed and passed a death sentence on him in absentia. In July 1922, he was assassinated by two Armenian gunmen in Tbilisi.

JANISSARIES.

Ottoman infantry corps that was at the forefront in the empire's conquests in Europe and Asia. In Syrian history, their significance lay in the garrisons established in the major cities of Aleppo and Damascus, where they constituted virtually autonomous power blocs that took over sections of the local economies and could challenge the authority of Ottoman governors. In seventeenth century Damascus, a distinction arose between "local" janissaries (*yarliyya*), who were artisans, other townsmen, and troops who struck roots in the local economy, and imperial janissaries (*kapi kullari*), troops dispatched to counter the rebelliousness of the local janissaries. In the eighteenth century, the two factions occasionally fought for supremacy in Damascus (1726, 1740). In 1741, the imperial janissaries were expelled, leaving the local janissaries in a dominant position until their defeat at the hands of the Ottoman governor As'ad Pasha al-Azm, who then reestablished a corps of imperial janissaries under his firm control. But the two factions resumed their feuds following As'ad Pasha's dismissal in 1757.

In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the janissaries of Aleppo contended for dominance with the ashraf, religious leaders claiming descent from the Prophet Muhammad. In the early 1800s, the janissaries completely dominated the city against the will of governors appointed by Istanbul. This situation abruptly ended in 1813, when the Ottoman governor carried out a massacre of leading janissaries that effectively reduced the group's collective power. The janissaries remained elements in local urban politics until Sultan Mahmud II eliminated the corps by means of a wellplanned massacre in March 1826 in Istanbul.

JAZA'IRI, TAHIR AL- (1852-1920).

A prominent figure in the early stages of the salafiyya movement. Tahir al-Jaza'iri's most lasting achievement was the foundation of the Zahiriyya

Library, Syria's first public library. From 1898 to 1907, he served as curator of libraries in the province of Damascus and set up libraries in Homs, Hama, Jerusalem, and Tripoli. Jaza'iri was also a pioneer in the development of modern education and he enjoyed Midhat Pasha's backing in his efforts to lay the foundations of a system of state schools in the province. As superintendent of schools in the early 1880s, he developed curricula and composed textbooks. Furthermore, Jaza'iri took a keen interest in the works of the thirteenth-century religious reformer Taqi al-Din Ahmad ibn Taymiyya, and he participated in the salafi revival of his works by seeking and circulating his manuscripts.

Jaza'iri was at the center of reformist trends in Damascus, and his private salons attracted Turkish officials, Arab ulama, and younger Arab students. This group, known as the senior circle, favored the restoration of the 1876 Ottoman constitution as well as educational reform. Ottoman authorities learned of his political leanings and began to harass him in the early 1900s. Finally, Jaza'iri got fed up with searches of his personal library and confiscation of his papers, so in 1907 he left Syria to settle in Egypt. Even though he had enjoyed good relations with Turkish partisans of constitutional government, he distrusted the Committee of Union and Progress and remained in Egypt after it came to power. During World War I, Jaza'iri supported the Arab Revolt. He did not return to Syria until 1919 when he was seriously ill, and he died shortly thereafter.

JAZIRA.

In Arabic *jazira* means an island or peninsula, and by extension refers to land lying between two rivers, in this case the Euphrates and Tigris rivers. The Jazira region in Syria consists mostly of a low plateau broken by several mountain ranges that give rise to tributaries of the Euphrates such as the Khabur and Balikh rivers. Throughout history, Jazira has been of strategic importance as a channel for communications between Iraq and Syria. The Arabs conquered it from the Byzantines in a series of campaigns between 639 and 641. In the early Islamic period it was a haven for religious dissidents and the site of frequent strife between Arab tribes competing

for scarce grazing lands. The most famous sons of Jazira are the founders of the tenth-century Hamdanid dynasty that established splendid courts in Aleppo and Mosul.

Until modern times Jazira was a sparsely settled region, mostly inhabited by bedouin, but after World War I, France encouraged the settlement of refugees from Turkey, mostly Armenians and other Christians. During the French Mandate other refugees from Turkey and Iraq included Kurds and Assyrians. These twentieth-century migrations have made Jazira the country's most heterogeneous province. New towns sprang up, most notably Hasaka, which has a Christian majority, and Qamishli, at the same time that bedouin were induced to settle down. Qamishli in particular, located near the Turkish border along a railway running to Aleppo, became the center of a regional economic boom based on the export of agricultural and pastoral products. Among Kurds, Armenians, and Assyrians sentiment for autonomy was quite strong, but France did not create a separate regime as it had for Jabal Druze and the Alawi districts. When the 1936 National Bloc government assumed responsibility for administering the Jazira, however, a strong movement for autonomy developed. The government appointed a Sunni from Damascus to govern the restive province. He failed to reconcile autonomist elements to the new order, and soon a revolt of Kurds and Christians erupted, forcing the governor to flee Qamishli. Continued troubles led the French to establish a separate regime for Jazira in July 1939, but Syrian control was restored the following year.

During the 1940s and 1950s, population and agricultural production grew rapidly. Aleppan merchants invested in machinery to cultivate this vast region and induced peasants from western Syria to migrate to Jazira to work the land. In a decade, the amount of land under cultivation doubled. The province has witnessed ongoing economic development and population growth, but it appears that further agricultural expansion will be costly and slow because of difficulties with irrigation, drainage, and sedimentation in projects along the Euphrates and Khabur rivers. The region's major cities are

Qamishli (150,000), Dayr al-Zur (120,000), Raqqa (120,000), and Hasaka (100,000).

JEWS.

Syria's Jewish community has its origins in antiquity with their migration to the area in the thirteenth century B.C. After the seventh-century Arab conquest, they continued to live in Aleppo and Damascus. Like the Christians under Muslim rule, the Jews did not experience pressure to convert or persecution; rather, they were permitted to practice their religion and govern their communal relations with minimal interference by the Muslim authorities. In the sixteenth century, the expulsion of Jews from Spain and efforts by the Ottoman Empire to attract Jewish traders and craftsmen led to a substantial immigration of Jews to Aleppo. Indeed the Ottoman era marked a high point in the fortunes of Syrian Jews, many of whom prospered in long-distance trade, finance, and official service.

Neither the end of the Ottoman Empire nor the imposition of the French Mandate affected Jews' status, but the Zionist movement and the threat it posed to the Arabs of Palestine fundamentally altered the conditions of life for Syrian Jews. Anti-Jewish sentiment emerged in the mid-1930s because of Syrian opposition to Zionism and the suspicion that Syrian Jews sympathized with the movement to turn Palestine into a Jewish state. A few attacks on Jews in Damascus occurred in 1936 and 1945. After the United Nations passed a resolution calling for the partition of Palestine into Jewish and Arab states in November 1947, anti-Jewish violence erupted in Aleppo, where a number of synagogues were set afire and destroyed. During the Palestine War of 1948, there were further attacks on Jewish property in Damascus.

As recently as 1943 there were nearly 30,000 Jews in Syria, but that number dropped sharply to around 6,000 because of emigration in the years surrounding the 1948 creation of Israel. Ongoing hostility between Syria and Israel meant that the remaining Syrian Jews were viewed with suspicion by the government and people. By 1990, the Jewish population was divided among 4,500 in Damascus, 1,000 in Aleppo, and about 100 in the northeastern city of Qamishli.

In 1994 the Syrian government made a gesture of goodwill toward Israel when it announced a free emigration policy for Syrian Jews. Around 3,000 Jews left, leaving just several hundred in the country.

JORDAN.

Known as Transjordan before 1949. Amir Abdallah, the son of Sharif Husayn ibn Ali, ruled Transjordan from the time of its establishment in 1921. He always harbored the ambition of adding Syria to his kingdom. Ultimately, Abdallah did add to his kingdom portions of eastern Palestine in the course of the Palestine War of 1948. From the time of Syrian independence in 1946 until Abdallah's assassination in July 1951, he pursued his ambition to rule Syria by meddling in its internal affairs. After his death, though, Syria became more aggressive toward Jordan and its new ruler King Husayn. In the Arab cold war of the 1950s and 1960s, Syria and Jordan consistently found themselves on opposing sides because of Syria's republican nature and opposition to western influence on one hand and Jordan's monarchical government and support for western interests on the other. Relations deteriorated when the neo-Ba'th regime came to power in 1966. It accused Jordan of supporting an abortive plot that year and struck back with a car bomb at a border crossing the next year. That led to a brief cut in relations. Further occasions for disagreement included Syrian support for an independent Palestinian guerrilla organization, Fatah, and support for the 1970 rising of Palestinian guerrillas against the Jordanian monarchy. Once again relations were cut in July 1971.

Hafiz al-Asad's policy of moderation in foreign relations led to an improvement of ties with Jordan on the eve of the October 1973 war, but in the late 1970s relations again worsened when the Syrians accused Jordan of harboring Muslim Brothers seeking to overthrow the Asad regime. Jordan then developed strong ties to Iraq as a counter against Syria and staunchly supported Iraq in its war against Iran throughout the 1980s. Furthermore, for most of the 1980s Syria suspected King Husayn of willingness to enter a peace process sponsored by the United States that would exclude

Syria. After the 1990-1991 crisis and war over Kuwait, Syria and Jordan found themselves in similar circumstances as both countries agreed to participate in peace talks with Israel, and for a time there were signs that the need to coordinate policies would dictate better relations; but Jordan's signing of a peace treaty with Israel in October 1994 again demonstrated the divergence in the two countries' interests and policies.

JULY 1860 DAMASCUS MASSACRE.

On 9 July, Muslims began several days of attacks against Christian townsmen of the Bab Tuma quarter, looting and burning churches, homes, and shops, and massacring Christians. Anti-Christian sentiment was stoked during the Egyptian occupation (1831-1840) by Ibrahim Pasha's favorable treatment of Christians. The 1860 outbreak came in the context of rising anti-Christian sentiment in the Ottoman Empire due to the Tanzimat reforms, particularly the 1856 edict declaring equality between Muslims and non-Muslims, and the improving commercial prospects of Christians more generally. It was more immediately related to fighting between Druzes and Maronites in Lebanon.

Tensions rose in the first week of July on the heels of reports of Druze military victories over Christians. Damascene Muslims taunted and threatened the town's Christians. At that point the Algerian hero Abd al-Qadir alJaza'iri, resident in Damascus since 1855, urged the city's Muslim leaders to prevent a violent outbreak that could lead to European intervention in Syria, but his warnings failed to prevent the riots. The incident that ignited the violence involved a number of Muslim youths who drew crosses on streets so that Christians would have to step on them. The Ottoman governor punished the boys by making them remove the markings. Muslims in the marketplace then forced the guards to let the youths go, and a furious Muslim crowd formed that initiated eight days of attacks in Bab Tuma. By no means did all Damascene Muslims condone the violence. Indeed, prominent notables offered refuge, and Jaza'iri took a contingent of armed men into the Christian quarter to rescue terrified Christians. In all, some 5,000 of the city's 20,000 Christians were killed; of the 15,000 survivors, Jaza'iri and

his men saved 10,000, and the rest resided in other parts of the city where their Muslim neighbors provided protection.

News of the atrocities caused outrage in Europe and triggered military intervention by several powers, chiefly France. In order to demonstrate Ottoman resolve and to fend off European demands for closer supervision of Ottoman governance, the authorities declared martial law and inflicted harsh punishment on the town's Muslims for committing the outrages and on their own officials for failing to prevent or halt the violence. The Ottoman governor was executed, a collective fine imposed on the city's Muslims, around 250 Muslims were executed for their crimes, and nearly 150 were exiled, including some of the city's leading dignitaries. To drive home the point that Ottoman authority was not to be challenged, Damascenes were disarmed and conscripted, something that had been tried three times before in the 1840s and 1850s but had encountered violent resistance. By October 1860, 3,000 men had been drafted and sent to Anatolia, and conscription became an annual event thereafter. An indemnity was levied on the entire province equal to two years' annual revenues, and it was used to reimburse Christians for destroyed property and for the reconstruction of Bab Tuma, which was completed by 1864. In spite of these punitive and restorative measures and indications of Ottoman concern for Christians' welfare, hundreds left Damascus for safer confines in Lebanon. In the broader historical scheme, the events of 1860 marked a turning point in relations between Istanbul and Syria: thereafter, the Ottomans subjected the province to much closer and more effective control.

JUNE 1967 WAR.

Also known as the Six Day War, this conflict fundamentally altered the contours of the Arab-Israeli conflict. In a sense, Syria's neo-Ba'thist regime planted the seeds of war with its provocations of Israel in the demilitarized zones. As military clashes escalated, it appeared possible that Israel might strike at Damascus to punish the Syrians. On 13 May 1967, reports reached Egypt that Israel was preparing to invade Syria. Egyptian President Gamal Abd al-Nasir responded by ordering the withdrawal of United Nations

forces stationed in Gaza and in Sinai at the entrance of the Gulf of Aqaba. Nasir then sent troops into Sinai and announced the closure of the Gulf of Aqaba to Israeli shipping. Diplomatic efforts to defuse the crisis were still being pursued when Israel's leaders decided to launch surprise attacks on Syria, Egypt, and Jordan.

On the war's first day, 5 June, Israeli warplanes destroyed the air forces of all three Arab countries. In the first four days of fighting, Israel conquered the Sinai Peninsula and Gaza Strip from Egypt and the West Bank from Jordan while Syria launched token artillery attacks from the Golan Heights. By the evening of 8 June, Egypt had accepted a cease-fire and Syria followed the next morning. But Israeli Minister of Defense Moshe Dayan, without consulting the Israeli cabinet, ordered a full attack on the Syrian front. When a cease-fire took effect the following evening, Israeli forces had occupied the entire Golan Heights. The war was a devastating blow to what little legitimacy the neo-Ba'th regime could claim and damaged the reputation of Defense Minister Hafiz al-Asad. An enduring legacy of the war is the Israeli occupation of the Golan Heights. The absence of any progress toward a diplomatic remedy for Syria's territorial loss led to the October 1973 war.

K

KAFTARU, AHMAD (1915-).

The Sunni chief jurisprudent, or mufti, of Syria since 1964. Kaftaru received a traditional Islamic religious education and became a teacher of religion in Qunaytra in 1948. He then became mufti of Damascus in 1951 and was active in several religious associations. Kaftaru is particularly interested in interfaith dialogue and has traveled widely to participate in conferences devoted to interfaith understanding.

KASM, ABD AL-RA'UF AL- (1932-).

Prime minister under Hafiz al-Asad from January 1980 until October 1987. Kasm was the son of a well-known religious scholar of Damascus. He had become acquainted with Asad in the early 1950s when

both were active as student members of the Ba'th Party. Kasm went on to become a professor of urban planning at Damascus University. In the midst of the Islamist uprising, Asad appointed Kasm prime minister in an attempt to sway the Sunni Muslims of Damascus. Kasm took several steps to placate Sunni public opinion, but they had practically no effect in quelling the unrest. As prime minister, Kasm presided over a vast civilian bureaucracy that was frequently bent to the needs of the more powerful military branch of government. On several occasions he tried to curtail different generals' smuggling and siphoning resources from the public sector, but these efforts were ultimately futile. Kasm's dismissal came at a time of economic hardship, but his tenure had been the longest of any prime minister since independence.

KAWAKIBI, ABD AL-RAHMAN AL- (1849-1903).

An influential writer and advocate of Islamic reform, Kawakibi was born to an influential family of Aleppo. He was active in the earliest stages of Arabic journalism, working first for the official Ottoman paper and later issuing a short-lived private newspaper as well. In his journalistic writings Kawakibi criticized Ottoman governors and other officials. As a result, his publications were banned and he got embroiled in disputes with the Ottoman governor of Aleppo. His troubles led him to emigrate to Egypt in 1898.

Kawakibi is best known for two essays that criticized the Ottoman political order at the time of Sultan Abdulhamid. The title of the first work refers to the Arabic nickname for Mecca, Mother of Cities, and calls for the restoration of the caliphate to the Arab clan of Quraysh. According to Kawakibi, this renewed caliphate would spark an Islamic spiritual revival but not provide a focus for Muslim political unity. His second work details the evils of unrestrained despotism and was intended as a sharp criticism of Ottoman misrule.

KHABUR RIVER.

A major tributary of the Euphrates River that rises in Turkey and flows for 486 km in Syria's Jazira region before joining the Euphrates south of Dayr al-Zur.

Government projects to construct barrages and drain off salt have enabled the development of agriculture along the Khabur. Hasaka (population 100,000) is the major town on this river.

KHADDAM, ABD AL-HALIM AL- (1932-).

One of a handful of President Hafiz al-Asad's closest advisers. Khaddam is a Sunni Muslim from the coastal town of Banyas who joined the Ba'th Party when still in high school. He and Asad became acquainted as party activists in Latakia in the early 1950s. In the first Ba'thist regime, Khaddam was governor of Hama when anti-government protests erupted in April 1964. Three years later, he had the misfortune to be governor of Qunaytra when it was lost to Israel in the June 1967 war. In the neo-Ba'th regime, Khaddam entered the cabinet as minister of economy and foreign trade. After Asad seized power in 1970, he made Khaddam his foreign minister, a post he held until 1984 when he was promoted to first vice president. Since Syria's intervention in the Lebanese Civil War in 1976, Khaddam has managed Syrian policy in Lebanon. He also helped shape Syria's close relations with the Soviet Union in the late 1970s and 1980s.

KHARIJI.

A small Muslim sect that had its greatest importance in early Islamic history in the disputes over the caliphate. They emerged during the contest between Ali ibn Abi Talib and Mu'awiya when the former agreed to an arbitration to settle their dispute. Some of Ali's followers opposed his compromise and they seceded (*kharaja*) from his camp, then becoming his deadly enemies for what they considered to be his betrayal of fundamental religious principles. In 661, a Khariji assassinated Ali, but an attempt on Mu'awiya's life failed. In later years, Khariji revolts would plague the Umayyad dynasty and its successor, the Abbasid dynasty. The movement was strong in parts of Iraq, Iran, Arabia, and North Africa, while in Syria it established a strong presence among Arab tribes in Jazira until the tenth century.

KHURI, FARIS AL- (1877-1962).

This prominent nationalist in the French Mandate era was unusually influential for a Christian. In the early mandate period Khuri was a political ally of Abd al-Rahman Shahbandar and served as vice president of the People's Party. For his role in supporting the Great Revolt of 1925-1927, the French briefly exiled him. In 1932 Khuri helped form the National Bloc, in whose leadership he would figure throughout the mandate era. He was part of the delegation that went to Paris in 1936 to negotiate the Franco-Syrian Treaty, and he served as speaker of parliament from 1936 to 1939, and again in 1943. He headed three short-lived ministries in 1944-1945 before returning to his position as speaker of parliament.

In the independence period, Khuri became prime minister in October 1954 following the first free national elections since 1947 and five years of military domination. His cabinet drew heavily from the conservative National Party and People's Party, both known for pro-western stances in foreign policy. The increasingly popular neutralist impulse, though, was well represented in parliament, and Khuri had to declare his intention to keep Syria out of any pro-western alliances. In January 1955, he attended an Arab ministers' conference in Cairo meant to coordinate opposition to Iraq's participation in a security pact with Turkey. Khuri's refusal to condemn Iraq led to the fall of his cabinet on 7 February 1955.

KING-CRANE COMMISSION.

At the Paris Peace Conference of 1918-1919, American President Woodrow Wilson proposed that the allies send a commission to the Arab lands to determine the wishes of the people regarding their political future. France and Great Britain, however, refused to participate, but Wilson still sent an American team headed by Dr. Henry Churchill King and Mr. Charles R. Crane to conduct the inquiry. The commission visited Damascus from 25 June to 19 July 1919. During their visit, they met with the Syrian Congress, religious leaders, and various delegations. They reported overwhelming sentiment for the independence and unity of Syria, including Palestine, under a constitutional monarchy with Amir Faysal as king. Members of the

commission learned that a limited mandate would be acceptable and that the United States was the preferred mandatory power. While a mandate held by Great Britain was also deemed acceptable, there was nearly complete opposition to France's aspirations in Syria. In October 1919, President Wilson suffered a stroke, and the United States withdrew from the diplomatic process. The commission's support for Syrian self-determination collided with French and British ambitions to carve out spheres of influence and its findings were completely ignored as the European powers established their rule over Arab lands against the will of the people.

KURDS.

Most Kurds live in Iran, Iraq, and Turkey, but the predominantly Kurdish region of the Middle East, known as Kurdistan, also spills over into northern Syria. They are the country's largest non-Arab minority in Syria, as they comprise nearly 10 percent of the population. Syrian Kurds speak the Bahdinani, or North Kurmanji, dialect of the Kurdish language that is spoken by the Kurds of Turkey and northern Iraq. Most Kurds live in the northern parts of the country near the Taurus Mountains, in Jazira province, and in the vicinity of Aleppo. They are mostly Sunni Muslim; a small number are Alawi, Yazidi, and Christian.

Kurds first became prominent in Syrian history during the twelfth century when the atabegs included Kurdish soldiers in their armies. One Kurdish clan, the Ayyubid, whose most famous member was Saladin, established its rule over Syria and Egypt for ninety years. In recent history, most Kurds have been pastoral nomads living in sparsely populated regions of the north. Syria's Kurdish population grew considerably between 1923 and 1938 when the Turkish government suppressed Kurdish revolts against its strict nationalist and secular policies, and thousands of Kurds fled south. In Iran, Iraq, and Turkey, Kurdish autonomy movements have flourished and struggled against nationalist governments in the last fifty years. In Syria, on the other hand, there has been just one brief attempt to form a Kurdish political movement. In 1957 a Syrian branch of the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iraq was formed with the purpose of promoting cultural

autonomy, but two years later it was banned under the United Arab Republic. Throughout the 1960s, the UAR and the two Ba'th Party regimes strictly forbid any signs of Kurdish separateness, but since 1970 Hafiz al-Asad has adopted a more tolerant approach. Moreover, he has supported Kurdish movements abroad. The Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, an Iraqi Kurdish party led by Jalal Talabani, was founded in Damascus in 1976, and the Syrian government has allowed the Kurdistan Worker's Party, a movement of Kurds in Turkey better known by its Kurdish acronym of PKK, to operate guerrilla bases since the early 1980s. It is notable that a large number of Kurds living in the cities, especially Damascus, supported the Syrian Communist Party, in part because its leader, Khalid Bakdash, is Kurdish, and in part because it is one of the few Syrian political parties that is not Arab nationalist.

KURD ALI, MUHAMMAD (1876-1953).

Pioneer of journalism and author of popular works on Arab and Syrian history. He studied under the religious and educational reformer Tahir al-Jaza'iri and frequented informal circles calling for administrative and social reform in the Ottoman Empire. Kurd Ali gained early notoriety for publishing *al-Muqtabas*, one of the most influential newspapers in the years before World War I. In it he voiced support for the movement for Arab rights, but during World War I Jamal Pasha coopted him to back the Ottoman cause. After the war, Kurd Ali became prominent as a founder of the Arab Academy in 1919, and in 1922 he became its president. In the French Mandate era he was education minister in 1928. He established his place in Syrian intellectual life by publishing works on the history of Damascus.

L

LABOR MOVEMENT.

Syria's modern labor movement began in 1926 when Subhi Khatib founded the country's first trade union. Printers and textile workers established a number of unions in following years. The first national conference of

trade unions convened in Damascus in 1936. Its members demanded restrictions on child labor, higher wages, a shorter work day, and legal guarantees for trade union activities. Two years later trade unions founded the General Trade Union Federation of Syria. In 1946, the Federation held a second conference at which it drafted a labor law for submission to parliament, which passed the measure. It allowed workers the right to strike. The Federation participated in the 1956 foundation of the International Confederation of Arab Trade Unions, whose first president was Subhi Khatib.

Under the United Arab Republic the Ba'thist Minister of Labor and Social Affairs brazenly meddled with trade union elections to stuff the leadership with Ba'th Party members and banished trade union groups under the influence of the Syrian Communist Party. Moreover, Egyptian President Gamal Abd al-Nasir, the UAR's head of state, revoked the 1946 Syrian labor law that had granted the right to strike. The new UAR code provided for closer government control over trade unions. When union leaders protested the new measures, Nasir had them arrested. The last vestige of trade union independence vanished in 1964 when the first Ba'thist regime placed trade unions under party control by dismissing the General Trade Union Federation's executive and appointing party members to the body.

LAND REFORM.

During the last sixty years of Ottoman rule (c. 1860-1920), the bulk of cultivable land in central Syria from Aleppo to Damascus came under the control of urban absentee landlords. Under the French Mandate, authorities continued the Ottoman effort at registering and surveying agricultural lands as well as favoring the expansion of large estates. The first proposals to limit landholdings came from Husni al-Za'im in 1949. A legal basis for land reform was laid in the constitution of 1950 under Adib al-Shishakli, but no effective measures would be taken until the United Arab Republic's agrarian reforms of 1958. At the time less than 1 percent of the rural population controlled about half of the cultivated lands. The UAR's measures established ceilings on private holdings of 80 hectares for irrigated land and 300

hectares for unirrigated land. By 1961, the government had taken about one-third of the land that could be expropriated, but only a tiny portion had been distributed to landless peasants. Another provision of the UAR land reform was the establishment of agricultural cooperatives.

Following Syria's secession from the UAR, a short-lived conservative government raised the ceilings on landholdings, but a more radical cabinet restored the UAR ceilings and strengthened the land reform law to accelerate the distribution of land to peasants. Then in 1963 the first regime of the Ba'th Party enacted amendments that lowered the ceiling on allowable holdings, thereby increasing the amount of land liable to expropriation and distribution. From 1965 to 1971, Ba'thist regimes implemented the expropriation and distribution of land. These measures created a large class of peasants with medium-size holdings and reduced the share of large landowners to about 10 percent of cultivated lands. While the various phases of land reform certainly created more equitable conditions in the countryside, they also had a disruptive effect on production in the first decade before it recovered in the 1970s.

LATAKIA.

The major port of northern Syria and an ancient Phoenician settlement, it is named for the mother (Laodice) of the Seleucid ruler who laid out the Hellenistic city. Latakia is in the middle of a fertile coastal region at the western edge of Jabal Ansariyya. Although it was a major city in Greek and Roman times, its significance diminished in the Islamic era. When France ruled Syria, though, it made Latakia the capital of a separate Alawi state. The city's importance to Syria's future was determined by the 1938 cession of Alexandretta, which traditionally served as northern Syria's port on the Mediterranean, to Turkey. Soon after independence, the Syrian government funded a project to enlarge and improve Latakia's port (1950-1957). The growth of trade necessitated a second project (1958-1968). The city's population has grown from 7,000 at the turn of the century to nearly 300,000 today, making it Syria's fourth-largest city.

LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES.

Also known as the Arab League. In 1943, Egyptian Prime Minister Mustafa al-Nahhas conducted talks with delegations from Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and Transjordan with a view to establishing a framework for Arab cooperation. Nahhas then persuaded the governments of those countries to send representatives to Alexandria to constitute a preparatory committee that would pave the way for founding a pan-Arab organization. The preparatory committee, including the prime ministers of Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, and Transjordan, duly convened in September 1944. On 7 October, they approved the Alexandria Protocol, which called for the creation of the League of Arab States to promote political, economic, social, and cultural cooperation. Negotiations over the text of the League's pact were completed in March 1945, and the League was formally established 10 May 1945. It has provided a framework for inter-Arab relations and the resolution of conflict, although its effectiveness has been hamstrung by bitter disputes among member states.

LEAGUE OF NATIONAL ACTION.

A pan-Arab nationalist movement founded in 1933 as a public successor to the secret Arab Liberation Society created in 1929 and modeled on the late Ottoman era Arab societies al-Fatat and al-Ahd. The League differed from the National Bloc in its pan-Arab ideology while the latter focused on independence for Syria. In accord with its ideology, the League established branches in Iraq and Palestine. Although dissatisfied with the Bloc's moderation toward French Mandate authorities, the League lacked a mass base and therefore tended to cooperate with the Bloc. The French banned the League in March 1939. Early members included Akram al-Hawrani, Zaki al-Arsuzi, and Jallal al-Sayyid, all of whom became involved in other political movements in the 1940s.

LEBANESE CIVIL WAR.

This tragic conflict lasted from 1975 to 1990 and was the occasion for Syrian military intervention and occupation of much of the country. The civil war had its roots in long-simmering political tensions over a variety of

issues, the central one being the distribution of power in Lebanon's political system. These tensions erupted into fullblown civil war in April 1975. On one side, leftist Lebanese and Palestinian militias fought for fundamental changes in Lebanon's political system, economic policy, and the government's stance toward the large Palestinian refugee population; on the other side, largely Maronite Christian militias supported the political status quo. In June 1976, Syrian forces entered Lebanon to prevent a victory by leftistPalestinian forces. A stable cease-fire was negotiated among the various parties in October 1976.

The failure of Lebanon's various factions and militias to agree on a political resolution for the civil war prolonged Syria's occupation of much of the country. From 1977 to 1978, Syria's brief alliance with the Maronites broke down as the latter turned to Israel for support against the Palestinians and Lebanese left. A new element arose in 1981 when Bashir Gemayel's Lebanese Forces consolidated hegemony over the hitherto divided Maronite community and nurtured an alliance with Israel. Gemayel wanted Israel to invade Lebanon in order to force the Syrians out. In pursuit of this aim, he launched an attempt to take over the Bekaa Valley town of Zahle in April 1981. The Syrians counterattacked, and it took intensive American diplomacy to prevent the outbreak of hostilities between Israel and Syria. Gemayel's hopes for Israeli intervention, however, were merely delayed until Israel's June 1982 invasion began the Lebanese War of 1982. Despite Israel's military victory, Syria was able to regain its dominant position in Lebanon by the end of 1985 but could not bring about a resolution of the civil conflict.

The last chapter of the civil war began with the expiration of President Amin Gemayel's term in September 1988 and the failure of parliament to elect a successor. Gemayel designated General Michel Aoun head of a caretaker government, but the cabinet refused to recognize Aoun and insisted on its sole legitimacy to represent the government. Syria attempted to devise a formula for political reform to end the crisis, but Aoun declared that a Syrian withdrawal must precede any discussion of reform and he proclaimed a war of

liberation to expel Syrian troops from the country. Arab mediation led to the Ta'if Accord of October 1989, providing for changes in the political system, but Aoun rejected the accord and the governments of first Rene Muawad and then Ilyas Hrawi elected according to its terms. Lebanon witnessed some of the war's worst fighting from 1989 to 1990 as Lebanese became divided between Aoun's enthusiastic followers and his enemies backed by Syria. The stalemate was broken in October 1990 after Syria agreed to participate in the coalition against Iraq's annexation of Kuwait. In a gesture of gratitude, the United States gave Syria the green light to carry out an air attack on Aoun at the presidential palace, forcing him to flee to the French embassy and ending his challenge to Syrian domination. Since that time, Lebanon has gradually reconstituted itself along the lines laid down by the Ta'if Accord.

LEBANESE WAR OF 1982.

In June 1982 Israel invaded Lebanon in order to destroy the Palestine Liberation Organization, which had established its headquarters in Beirut in the early 1970s. Initially, Syria stayed out of the conflict, but Israeli forces attacked Syrian troops in the Bekaa Valley, destroyed Syria's surface-to-air missile installations in Lebanon, and inflicted a huge defeat on the Syrian air force. Nonetheless, the bulk of Syrian ground forces staged a limited retreat to more defensible positions within Lebanon while a smaller number participated in defending Beirut against Israel. Meanwhile, the Soviet Union, chagrined at the dismal performance of its missile defense systems, resupplied the Syrian army and air force. On the other hand, Israel's eightweek siege of Beirut succeeded in forcing the PLO to withdraw from Lebanon by the end of August. Israel also engineered the election of its Lebanese ally Bashir Gemayel to the presidency with the expectation that he would negotiate a peace treaty and pressure Syrian forces to withdraw from Lebanon. Gemayel, however, was assassinated in early September and succeeded by his brother Amin Gemayel, who was less beholden to Israeli interests. After Bashir's assassination Christian militiamen under Israeli supervision

carried out a massacre of Palestinian civilians in two Beirut refugee camps. The Sabra and Shatila massacres led to the deployment of a multinational force of American, French, and Italian troops. The United States decided to keep its troops in Lebanon to support the Amin Gemayel government.

There followed an American initiative to arrange a treaty between Lebanon and Israel. Amin Gemayel's government negotiated with Israel an agreement that was signed on 17 May 1983. The agreement granted Israel the right to establish permanent surveillance posts in the south as well as to conduct land and air patrols. It also made an Israeli withdrawal contingent on one by Syria. In response, Syria rallied Lebanese forces that opposed the agreement and Gemayel's bid to restore Lebanon's pre-civil war political structure. By the beginning of 1984, Syria had forced Gemayel to abandon the May 1983 agreement with Israel. Moreover, Syrian support for Lebanese guerilla attacks against Israeli soldiers induced its leaders to withdraw their troops to a strip of territory in southern Lebanon that Israel declared its security zone. In February 1984, President Gemayel formally revoked the accord with Israel. At the end of 1995, Israel continued to occupy parts of southern Lebanon while Syria supported Lebanese guerillas in their struggle to expel Israel from that zone.

LEBANON.

In the late Ottoman era a special regime was established in Mount Lebanon, the central mountainous region of the present-day country. When France took over Syria and Lebanon after World War I, it formally divided them and enlarged the province of Mount Lebanon by attaching to it predominantly Muslim regions to its north, east and south, including the port cities of Beirut, Tripoli, Sidon, and Tyre. Reattachment of these districts and cities to Syria was a popular nationalist issue among Lebanese Muslims and Syrian nationalists during the early French Mandate period. By World War II, however, the permanence of Lebanon's boundaries had won grudging acceptance among Syrian and Lebanese Muslim leaders, although popular political

movements in both countries would continue to oppose the new map.

In the independence era a dispute arose between Lebanon and Syria over their unified customs regime, which dated to the mandate era. France had treated them as a unified administration until 1937, when the Lebanese and Syrian governments agreed to separate them, but could not reach accord on the division of revenues. In March 1950 the Khalid al-Azm government terminated the customs union, a move that caused severe disruption to the Syrian economy. The dispute ended two years later. Relations between the neighbors remained tense for much of the 1950s because of Syria's foreign policy of neutrality and Lebanon's leaders' pro-western orientation. This difference became most evident in 1958 shortly after the formation of the United Arab Republic when Lebanese Arab nationalists agitated for adherence to the union. Lebanon's President Camille Chamoun invoked the Eisenhower Doctrine, which promised American support against communist subversion, and American marines landed in Lebanon to shore up the government. In the 1960s Ba'th Party regimes castigated Lebanon for maintaining a pro-western stance.

In the 1970s, Syria viewed Lebanon primarily in terms of its own strategic security vis-a-vis Israel. The loss of the Golan Heights in the June 1967 war and instability in Lebanon caused Syrian leaders to fear an Israeli attack through Lebanon. Consequently, since its intervention in the Lebanese Civil War, Syria has insisted that any resolution of that conflict take into consideration Syrian strategic interests. In order to support its position in Lebanon since 1976, Syria has cultivated tactical alliances with Lebanese Druze, Shii, and Sunni groups. See LEBANESE CIVIL WAR, LEBANESE WAR OF 1982, TA'IF ACCORD.

M

MA'ARRI, ABU AL-ALA AL- (973-1058).

One of the great masters of classical Arabic poetry and prose, he spent most of his life in his native town, Ma'arrat al-Nu'man, a northern Syrian

town between Homs and Aleppo. As a small child, Ma'arri was stricken by smallpox and became blind. He is known as the "twofold prisoner" because of his blindness and his decision to seclude himself in his room at the family home after his mother's death in 1010. The poet was also renowned for his asceticism, which included an austere vegetarian diet and a vow to never marry or have children. In fact, he requested that the inscription on his grave read, "This wrong was by my father done to me, but never by me to anyone." He lived during the era of Hamdanid decline and Mirdasid ascendancy, a period of disarray and strife in northern Syria as the Fatimids and Byzantines contended for domination over the region. Around 1008, Ma'arri traveled to Baghdad, which had once been the peerless center of Arabic literary culture, but he found only a shadow of its former greatness. When he returned to Syria, he found his mother had just recently died. During nearly fifty years of seclusion he corresponded widely with poets and officials in Syria, Iraq, and Egypt; for instance, he entered a debate with a Fatimid scholar who challenged the virtue of his vegetarianism. His pensive, brooding poetry reflects his deep contemplation of religious and philosophical themes. Ma'arri expressed a strong faith in God, but he doubted the reality of resurrection, a fundamental tenet of Islam, and he emphasized the power of human reason. Such views caused some Muslims to call into question his religious orthodoxy. His contributions to Arabic prose include a commentary on contemporary political events and personalities delivered by animals, but his better-known work is "The Epistle of Forgiveness." In this work, prompted by an epistle from an Aleppan scholar, Ma'arri presents a drama set in Paradise and Hell that has led some modern critics to posit it as an influence on Dante's *Divine Comedy*.

MADRASA.

A madrasa is a Muslim religious school. For centuries, it was the most widespread form of organized learning in the Muslim world. A madrasa customarily consisted of a mosque, a school, and rooms for student lodgers. The institution first appeared in eastern Iran during the eleventh century and spread westward. The first madrasa in Syria was erected in

1098 under a Saljuk prince of Damascus. Nur al-Din Mahmud (r. 1146-1174) and Saladin (r. 1174-1193) were the first avid builders of madrasas in Syria, and later Ayyubid and Mamluk rulers emulated them. By 1500, Damascus alone had more than 120 madrasas. The legal instrument for establishing a madrasa was a *waqf*, a deed of property and its income for charitable purposes in perpetuity. The donor usually specified how it was to be administered and what subjects were to be taught. The major focus of instruction was Islamic law, *fiqh*, according to one of the four traditional Sunni schools of law (sing. *madhhab*). Donors often created endowments for teachers' stipends and students' lodging and a food allowance.

From the eleventh century Saljuks until the late nineteenth century, the madrasa represented the pinnacle of learning. In the era of Ottoman reform, however, western forms and curricula began to displace the madrasa. In modern times, higher learning in Islamic sciences has been incorporated into Damascus University's College of Islamic Law.

MADRID CONFERENCE.

An international conference on the ArabIsraeli conflict held on 30 October to 3 November 1991. After the United States and coalition forces, including Syria, expelled Iraq from Kuwait, the Bush administration took a bold diplomatic initiative to bring all parties to the Arab-Israeli conflict into a comprehensive process to reach a peace settlement. In July 1991 Syria announced its agreement to attend such an international conference sponsored by the United States and the Soviet Union. The Madrid Conference marked the first time since the Armistice of 1949 talks that Syrian and Israeli representatives met in a formal diplomatic forum. The conference itself was more ceremonial than substantial, but it marked a major breakthrough in attempts to end the conflict. It was followed by bilateral talks held in Washington and multilateral talks held at various sites in Europe and the Middle East. Syria has refused to attend the multilateral talks on arms control, water, economic development, and the environment. Syrian-Israeli peace

talks have been held intermittently since 1992, but after three years of negotiations it is not yet clear whether the two sides will reach an agreement.

MALKI, ADNAN AL- (1918-1955).

Deputy chief of staff of the army, Colonel Malki's assassination on 22 April 1955, as he attended a soccer match, created a political firestorm. In December 1952, Malki had led an abortive coup against Adib al-Shishakli that resulted in his arrest. After Shishakli's downfall in February 1954, he was restored to his rank and he rallied army support for neutralist politicians and opposition to Syria's adherence to the Baghdad Pact. By the time of his murder, Malki was one of the most powerful figures in the armed forces and thus in national politics. The assassin, who committed suicide right after shooting Malki, was a sergeant who belonged to the pro-western Syrian Social National Party, which may have had aspirations of attaining predominant influence in the army. Instead, the event was the occasion for a campaign of repression against the party, which was banned and whose members were purged from the army and bureaucracy. The leftist parties, the Syrian Communist Party and the Ba'th Party, exploited Malki's martyrdom to boost their own popularity as upholders of Syrian independence from foreign domination. There followed trials of SSNP members and several men accused of plotting the assassination. In June, 140 SSNP members were indicted for complicity in the crime and conspiring with the United States to install a pro-western government. The trial lasted from August to December and resulted in harsh sentences on 26 SSNP members. In the overall political scene, the Malki affair further weakened conservatives and boosted the standing of leftists.

MA'LULA.

The largest of three villages in modern Syria where a dialect of Aramaic is still spoken. Ma'lula is 60 km southeast of Damascus at an elevation of 1,500 meters on a plateau at the southern end of the Anti-Lebanon range. It is famous for its ancient Christian holy places, including the monastery of St. Sergius, which dates from Byzantine times. Its current

population of 2,000 is mostly Greek Orthodox. The younger generation is tending to use Arabic more in speech, although young people can understand their elders and speak Aramaic. The other two Aramaic-speaking villages are Bakh'a and Jabba'din.

MAMLUK.

The term for a military slave. The Abbasids were the first Muslim dynasty to use mamluks. They would purchase non-Muslim slaves (Islamic law does not allow the enslavement of Muslims) and train them for service to the ruler. In the second half of the ninth century, the Abbasid caliphate came to depend on mamluks as a palace guard. Later Muslim dynasties perpetuated the practice. Mamluks constituted a crucial part of later Ayyubid armies and eventually seized power in Egypt and Syria in the middle of the thirteenth century. These slave soldiers established the Mamluk sultanate, which ruled Egypt, Syria, and much of Arabia until the Ottoman conquest of 1516-1517. The Ottomans eliminated the mamluks in Syria, but mamluk commanders and their cohorts remained an important element in Egypt throughout the first three centuries of Ottoman rule.

MAMLUK SULTANATE.

A line of Turkish and Circassian sultans who ruled Syria from 1260 until 1516. The practice of relying on slave soldiers in Muslim societies went back to Abbasid times. The Ayyubid dynasty that ruled Egypt and Syria in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries was just one of several Muslim powers to import, train, and depend on regiments of military slaves. In 1250, a band of these slaves seized power in Egypt and brought down the local Ayyubid line. The new regime would be based on the importation, training, and promotion to high office of military slaves from Central Asia and the Caucasus region.

The Mamluks first entered Syria in 1260 in response to a Mongol invasion, and they were the first Muslim power to defeat the Mongols on the field of battle at Ayn Jalut. There followed five decades of intermittent Mongol-Mamluk warfare marked by Mamluk success in turning back Mongol invasions in 1281, 1299-1303, and finally 1313. They also effected the

complete and final eviction of the Latin Crusader kingdoms. In 1268, Mamluk troops captured Antioch; in 1291, Acre fell, followed by Tyre, Sidon, and Beirut. Meanwhile, the remaining Ayyubid potentates scattered in Syria were absorbed by the Mamluk sultanate.

The Mamluks were not Arab, but their victories over Mongol and Christian invaders earned them a degree of political legitimacy that they augmented with generous support for monumental urban construction and patronage of religious institutions. While Cairo remained the seat of the Mamluk sultanate, Damascus became a second capital from which Mamluk amirs ruled Palestine and coastal Syria. In fact, Damascus enjoyed a prolonged period of economic expansion and urban improvement during the fourteenth century. Aleppo was made the capital of northern Syria and also witnessed a long revival under Mamluk rule following its disastrous experiences under three Mongol occupations between 1260 and 1300. In these and other Syrian cities, the first century of Mamluk rule saw the construction and repair of dozens of mosques, schools, hospitals, and convents, as well as water works.

The prosperity and stability of Mamluk rule eroded during the last decade of the fourteenth century under the impact of civil wars among Mamluk factions contending for supremacy. These struggles left the Mamluks vulnerable to the Central Asian conqueror Timur Leng, who smashed Mamluk power in 1400 and wreaked havoc on Syrian cities. The reign of Sultan Barsbay (1422-1438) restored order, but the last five decades of Mamluk rule, 1468-1516, were marked by wars against Turkomen powers to the north, Christian piracy in the Mediterranean, growing bedouin incursions on settled lands, and abuses of power by Mamluk amirs. Mamluk rule ended in October 1516, when the Ottoman Sultan Selim I conquered Syria.

MARCH 8, 1963 COUP.

In this turning point of modern Syrian history a coalition of three groups of officers overthrew the civilian government of Khalid al-Azm. The conspirators included Ba'th Party officers in the Military Committee,

Nasirist officers, and an independent group led by Major General Ziyad al-Hariri, whose brigade stationed in Jabal Druze marched on Damascus while other units seized the air force base outside Damascus. The new rulers then established a National Revolutionary Command Council of twenty members, including twelve Ba'thists and eight Nasirists and independents. The council declared a state of emergency that abolished the democratic liberties that the Azm government had reinstated only ten weeks before. In the aftermath of the coup, a power struggle among the three groups of officers concluded in the triumph of the Military Committee by the beginning of August, thus inaugurating Ba'thist rule in Syria.

MARDAM, JAMIL (1894-1960).

One of Syria's foremost political leaders during the French Mandate era. As a young man he was active in the Arab nationalist secret society al-Fatat. During the early years of the French Mandate, Mardam joined the People's Party and later was a founding member of the National Bloc, in which he led the moderate faction seeking to cooperate with the French. In 1933, his leadership of the Bloc was challenged by the more pan-Arab Shukri al-Quwwatli, who encouraged the growth of the League of National Action to strengthen his position in the Bloc. But Mardam held on to the leadership and served as prime minister of the National Bloc government of 1936 to 1939. That government's several failures, particularly its inability to secure ratification of the Franco-Syrian Treaty by French parliament or to prevent Turkey's annexation of Alexandretta, severely damaged Mardam's standing in the Bloc. Moreover his government encountered strong resistance in regions that the French had administered separately between 1922 and 1936: Jabal Druze, Jabal Ansariyya, and Jazira. Mardam suffered further blows when several prominent figures, including Faris al-Khuri and Lutfi al-Haffar, resigned from the Bloc's executive committee in 1938. He also faced opposition from Abd al-Rahman Shahbandar, who rallied those upset with the prime minister's handling of the Alexandretta issue and negotiations over the treaty. Mardam responded by censoring newspapers expressing

Shahbandar's views and placed him under house arrest. The final blow to Mardam's government came in November 1938 when the French parliament voted against ratification of the treaty, but he did not resign until February 1939. Two months later, his longtime rival for leadership of the National Bloc, Shukri al-Quwwatli, ascended to the position of party chief. When Shahbandar was assassinated in June 1940, the investigation charged Mardam with plotting the crime and he fled to Iraq, where he spent the next two years.

When he returned to Syria, the country was preparing for national elections scheduled for July 1943. Mardam and Quwwatli patched up their differences to strengthen the National Bloc's electoral prospects. After the Bloc swept the polls, Sa'dallah al-Jabiri formed a cabinet with Mardam as foreign minister. When the Jabiri government fell in December 1946, President Quwwatli invited Mardam to head a cabinet. After the elections of 1947 returned the National Party to power, Mardam formed a new cabinet, which plunged the country into the Palestine War of 1948. Syrian public opinion held the government responsible for the army's poor showing against Israel and rumors spread that Mardam embezzled funds collected for the war. He tried to restore public confidence by forming a new cabinet in August 1948, but few were convinced that it represented real change, and the country slipped into three months of turmoil and political violence. The crisis subsided when Mardam submitted his resignation on 1 December, spelling the end of his long run as one of Syria's leading politicians.

MAYSALUN, BATTLE OF.

On 24 July 1920, French troops defeated Arab forces defending Amir Faysal's kingdom and snuffed out hopes for Syrian independence. The battle marked the end of diplomatic maneuvering between Faysal and France that had begun soon after the end of World War I. While France sought to impose its authority over Syria, Faysal strove to preserve some independence for the government he had constructed since October 1918. In June 1920, the French government decided to eliminate Faysal's regime and gave orders to General Henri Gouraud, who commanded French

troops in Lebanon to occupy Damascus as soon as possible. On 14 July, Gouraud issued an ultimatum to Faysal demanding that he accept the French Mandate, halt conscription, limit the size of the Syrian army, use currency issued by France, and allow French forces to occupy stations along the railroad line that ran from northern Lebanon through Homs and Hama to Aleppo. Faysal had four days to accept these terms or Gouraud would invade. The amir sought clarifications and an extension of the deadline, which Gouraud granted. He gave Faysal until 20 July to accept the terms and begin implementing them. Meanwhile nationalists in the Syrian Congress rejected the ultimatum and called for popular mobilization to resist a French occupation. Faysal in turn dissolved the Congress and wired his acceptance of Gouraud's latest demands on 19 July, but his surrender did not reach Gouraud because the telegraph wires had been cut. A French force of 12,000 crossed the Lebanese-Syrian frontier and Syrian forces withdrew to Khan Maysalun, just 25 km west of Damascus. On the morning of 24 July, Syrian troops and volunteers clashed with French forces. The Syrians had enough ammunition to fight for only a few hours while the French had air power and a handful of tanks in addition to plenty of ammunition. The battle commenced at dawn and was over by 10 A.M. France's decisive victory at Maysalun paved the way for its occupation of Syria and Faysal's flight from the country.

MELKITE. See GREEK ORTHODOX and GREEK CATHOLIC.

MIDHAT PASHA (1822-1884).

Famous Ottoman reformer who served as governor of Damascus from 1878 to 1879. Midhat first came to Syria in 1840 when he was posted as a low-level clerk in Damascus for two years, and he returned in 1851 as inspector of the province's finances. He later served as provincial governor in Baghdad and Bulgaria. In both posts he created gendarmeries to bring greater security, ordered the construction of roads and bridges, and opened schools. He played a key role in the tumultuous events of late 1876 when Istanbul saw the deposition of two sultans and the accession of

Sultan Abdulhamid in September in exchange for his promise to grant a constitution for the Ottoman Empire. The new sultan made Midhat the grand vizier, the head of the empire's vast bureaucracy, but two months later Abdulhamid dismissed him and removed him and other high officials associated with the constitutional movement from Istanbul by assigning them to provincial posts.

Midhat arrived in Damascus for the third time at the end of 1878, now as governor of the province. He concentrated on developing a better communications and transportation network, extending new telegraph lines, building post offices, and encouraging the construction of carriage roads to link the major towns. For instance, a road running from Damascus to Homs, Tripoli and Latakia enabled the Ottomans to gain firmer control over Jabal Ansariyya and its historically autonomous Alawi inhabitants. Midhat also gave a boost to education, as thirty schools opened during his brief tenure. In Damascus he urged Tahir al-Jaza'iri to form a benevolent society to pursue educational reforms, and he appointed Jaza'iri superintendent of schools in the province. He also encouraged Jaza'iri's project to found Syria's first public library. The reformist governor's other projects included improving the provincial gendarmerie and reforming tax collection. In spite of these efforts, the sultan suspected that Midhat was plotting to carve out an autonomous realm, and in August 1880, Abdulhamid ordered his transfer to a Turkish province, where the sultan's spies could keep a closer eye on him. The sultan later trumped up charges that Midhat had conspired to murder Sultan Abdulaziz in 1876. Midhat was tried, convicted, and imprisoned in the Arabian town of Ta'if. The sultan's agents murdered him while he was in prison in 1884.

MILITARY COMMITTEE.

This secret faction of the Ba'th Party was founded in Cairo by five Syrian officers during the United Arab Republic era. The original members included three Alawi officers, Salah al-Jadid, Hafiz al-Asad, Muhammad al-Umran, and two Isma'ili officers, Abd alKarim al-Jundi and Ahmad al-Mir. These men despised party

founders Michel Aflaq and Salah al-Din al-Bitar for their "betrayal" of the party when they dissolved it at Gamal Abd al-Nasir's insistence as a condition of forming the UAR in 1958. The Military Committee members wanted to rebuild the party and preserve the union with Egypt. When they returned to Syria after its secession from the UAR they contacted other officers, mostly Alawis, Druzes, and provincial Sunnis, with whom they worked to overthrow the government.

Because the members of the Military Committee were dismissed from the armed forces on their return to Syria, they developed ties with Nasirist officers and the few remaining Ba'thist officers in order to plot a coup d'etat. The first attempt was a mutiny by Nasirist and Ba'thist officers at Aleppo on 2 April 1962, but this adventure failed. The Military Committee then contacted Major-General Ziyad al-Hariri, who was not aligned with any of the factions but was apprehensive about Prime Minister Khalid al-Azm's desire to restore full civilian authority over the army. The combination of Hariri, Nasirists, and Ba'thists brought off the March 8, 1963 coup. The Military Committee then augmented its membership so that it grew to include ten officers, including men placed on the National Revolutionary Command Council.

The Military Committee maintained its cohesion in the first Ba'thist regime as it contended with Nasirists and the party's old guard for power, but tensions emerged when Umran called for more moderate economic and political measures to conciliate opposition to the regime. At the end of 1964, he was ousted from power and sent to Spain as the ambassador. The Military Committee won a trial of strength with the party old guard and seized power in the February 23, 1966 coup. Following the June 1967 war, tensions within the committee resurfaced between those who supported Jadid's aggressive policy toward Israel and economic radicalism at home and the supporters of Asad's call for restraint toward Israel and moderation in attacks on the Syrian bourgeoisie. By 1970, of the five original members, Asad and Jadid were on the verge of a decisive showdown, Umran was still in Spain, Mir was in exile in Beirut, and Jundi was dead.

When Jadid forced the issue in the fall, Asad seized power in what he called the corrective movement and arrested Jadid, spelling the end of the Military Committee.

MIRDASID DYNASTY.

Tribal rulers of Aleppo and northern Syria from 1023 to 1079. They came from the Banu Kilab tribe that had supported the Hamdanid dynasty during the later tenth century. After the fall of the Hamdanids in 1016, Salih ibn Mirdas led the Banu Kilab in their contest for power against the Byzantines and the Fatimids. The Mirdasids survived as rulers of a buffer region between Byzantine and Fatimid forces and by balancing the interests of Aleppan townsmen with those of the Banu Kilab tribesmen. Throughout their five decades of ascendance, the Mirdasids fended off several attempts by the Fatimids to absorb Aleppo into their empire. This ephemeral dynasty fell in 1079 to an Arab vassal of the Saljuk Turkish sultans.

MONGOLS.

Central Asian conquerors of the eastern half of the Muslim world. The Mongols first raided Muslim lands in 1218 when they conquered a Central Asian sultanate. Forty years later they sacked Baghdad and destroyed the Abbasid caliphate. They were then poised for further conquests in Syria and Egypt. Mongol forces overran Aleppo and Hama before a Mamluk army defeated them on 3 September 1260 at the Battle of Ayn Jalut (the Spring of Goliath) in Palestine and then drove the Mongols from Syria. There followed several decades of frontier warfare between the Mamluks and the Mongol Ilkhanid dynasty based in northwestern Iran. In 1280 and 1299, the Mongols invaded Syria. On the first occasion, the Mamluks defeated the Mongols near Homs. The second invasion, though, led to the occupation of Damascus, the destruction of much of the city, and a slaughter of its inhabitants. The Mongols then reached Gaza in southern Palestine before a Mamluk counteroffensive in 1303 drove the invaders out of Syria for the last time.

MU'AWIYA (c. 600-680).

The first Umayyad caliph (r. 661-680) and founder of that dynasty, renowned in Arab history for his deft

political touch that enabled him to provide two decades of political calm following the stormy contest to succeed Uthman. Mu'awiya's political tact is embodied in the aphorism attributed to him, "I apply not my lash where my tongue suffices, nor my sword where my whip is enough. And if there be one hair binding me to my fellow men, I let it not break. If they pull I loosen, and if they loosen I pull." The "hair of Mu'awiya" became a proverbial expression for tact and diplomacy. Yet Shi'i Muslims revile Mu'awiya for what they consider his usurpation of Ali ibn Abi Talib's rightful claim to the caliphate.

In 639, the second rightly-guided caliph, Umar, appointed Mu'awiya governor of Syria. He secured the loyalty of both immigrant Arabian tribes and Arab tribes that had long resided in Syria. Furthermore, he continued the early Muslim practice of relying on administrators, mostly Christian Arabs, who had served the Byzantines. Mu'awiya's favorite wife was a Christian, as were his court poet and physician. His lenience toward Syrian Arab Christians gained him broad political support in a land where the vast majority of the population adhered to the same religion as the Muslims' chief enemy, the Byzantines, who had only recently been displaced as rulers of Syria. Mu'awiya was governor of a frontier province, and like later Muslim rulers he used northern Syria as the springboard for military campaigns against Byzantine forces in Asia Minor. He also ordered the construction of the first Arab Muslim naval fleet, which he sent against Cyprus, Rhodes, and Sicily. In 655 Mu'awiya ordered his navy to conduct the first of many Muslim assaults on Constantinople.

When his kinsman the caliph Uthman was murdered in 656, Mu'awiya refused to recognize Ali's claim to the caliphate. They marshalled their forces for a battle at Siffin on the Euphrates River in 657, but after some fighting the two sides agreed to submit their dispute to arbitration. Mu'awiya had still refused to acknowledge Ali as the caliph when the latter was assassinated in 661, whereupon Mu'awiya became the uncontested claimant to the caliphate, the seat of which he moved from Medina in Arabia to Damascus. The

heartlands of the Arab Empire in Syria, Iraq, Arabia, and Egypt were stable and prosperous under Mu'awiya, and he devoted much of his energy to military campaigns of conquest. In 668 he dispatched an Arab army under the command of his son Yazid to seize Constantinople, but the Byzantines withstood a siege of several months. Mu'awiya tried again with a longer siege that lasted from 674 to 680, but in the end the Byzantines forced a retreat. On a different front, in 663 he sent an army from Egypt into Byzantine-ruled North Africa, thereby reviving the enterprise of Arab conquest that had been suspended during the turmoil following Uthman's assassination. By the time of Mu'awiya's death in 680, Arab armies had reached the borders of Algeria. On the eastern front, the caliph appointed Ziyad, a former supporter of Ali, to govern Iraq and Iran. Ziyad consolidated Arab rule over eastern Iran and extended the empire into Afghanistan. In 674, Ziyad's son struck out north of Afghanistan to conquer the Buddhist towns of Bukhara and Samarkand. Shortly before his death, Mu'awiya designated his son Yazid as his successor, thereby breaking with fifty years of Muslim practice that had not set a precedent for dynastic succession.

MUHAMMAD ALI (c. 1768-1849).

Powerful ruler of Egypt (r. 1805-1848) who successfully challenged Ottoman authority by carving out a virtually autonomous realm over the Nile Valley.

Muhammad Ali took advantage of Ottoman weakness when he had his son Ibrahim Pasha lead an army into Syria in 1831. As governor of Syria, Ibrahim instituted the same measures of state monopoly over valuable resources, efficient taxation, conscription, and disarmament of informal militias that had solidified Muhammad Ali's position in Egypt. These measures, foreshadowing the Tanzimat reforms to come in the following decade, encountered violent resistance in various parts of Syria. In 1840, European opposition to Muhammad Ali's growing power forced him to abandon Syria in return for recognition of his descendants' hereditary rights to govern Egypt under Ottoman suzerainty.

MURSHID, SULAYMAN AL- (1905-1946).

Charismatic leader of an Alawi revivalist movement in the early years of the French Mandate. He was born Sulayman Yunus in a small village in Jabal Ansariyya. In 1922, he claimed to receive religious inspiration and attracted a following among the region's peasants. He then incited them to withhold taxes and defy the authorities, so the French arrested him in 1923. Upon his release Murshid claimed the power to work miracles and his following increased. At that point the French decided to develop friendly relations with him and turned him into an ally. Murshid became a prominent leader in Jabal Ansariyya, accumulating large amounts of land and marrying into influential Alawi families. In 1936, he was elected to the Syrian parliament, where he sought to preserve Alawi interests within a unified Syria. After independence in 1946, Murshid led a revolt. The government sent troops to Latakia province, captured him, and publicly executed him in Damascus.

MUSLIM BROTHERS.

The Society of Muslim Brothers was founded in Egypt in 1928 by Hasan al-Banna. A Syrian branch of this organization devoted to reviving Islam formed in 1946 when several Islamic reform societies merged under the leadership of Mustafa al-Siba'i. In the 1920s and 1930s, there appeared Muslim benevolent societies aiming to revive Islam and oppose western cultural influences (cinemas, immodest women's dress, mixing of genders in public). The direct ancestor of the Brothers was an Aleppan society called Dar alArqam, founded in 1935. From independence until 1958, the Brothers participated in elections and acquired a substantial following in Damascus but failed to attract much support in other parts of the country. In January 1952 the military ruler Adib al-Shishakli dissolved the organization, but it reemerged after his overthrow in 1954 in a diminished capacity. The government again banned the society during the United Arab Republic (1958-1961), and it has opposed each of the three regimes to rule in the name of the Ba'th Party. The society's leadership remained in the hands of Siba'i until poor health

forced him to step down in 1957. Isam al-Attar then led the Muslim Brothers for the next twelve years.

In April 1964, the Muslim Brothers instigated antigovernment demonstrations in Hama over the Ba'th's secularism and radical economic policies. The regime's violent suppression of this and later protests created a dilemma for the Brothers. Should they adopt armed struggle to overthrow the regime or pursue a nonviolent course in seeking to influence the regime? Attar favored the latter course, but in 1969 militant sections of the society ousted him. There emerged a new collective leadership, chief among whom was a teacher from Hama, Adnan Sa'd al-Din. This event marked the Brothers' turn to violent tactics, first in opposing the Ba'thist government and then in trying to overthrow it. Moreover, the Brothers' propaganda began to emphasize the regime's Alawi complexion and accused it of seeking to destroy Sunni Islam. In the late 1970s the Brothers carried out assassinations against members and supporters of the regime. Perhaps inspired by the Iranian Revolution, in 1980 the Muslim Brothers formed a coalition of Islamic groups called the Islamic Front in Syria. The Front's manifesto called upon all Syrians opposed to Asad's regime to join forces to struggle for the restoration of civil and political freedoms, the independence of the judiciary, and private property rights. Meanwhile an assortment of secular leftist groups and professional syndicates were organizing protests and demonstrations against the regime, an indication that it was not only religious sentiment that was offended by government policies and practices. The country's urban centers, particularly in the northern towns of Homs, Hama, and Aleppo, witnessed a vicious struggle between the government and the Islamist rebels. In June 1979, for instance, the Brothers massacred more than fifty Alawi cadets at an Aleppan artillery school. After an assassination attempt against President Hafiz al-Asad in June 1980, the government made association with the Muslim Brothers a capital crime. The culmination of this virtual civil war took place in February 1982, when Islamist forces briefly took over Hama. In the course of three weeks of fighting, government forces

retook the city, leveled huge stretches of urban landscape, and killed several thousand insurgents and civilians.

The Hama uprising marked the definitive victory of government forces. The Islamic Front then split. Some members had lost all confidence in armed struggle, while others sought to broaden their political base by allying with secular parties opposed to the Ba'thist government. In 1986 Asad offered amnesty to Muslim Brothers in exile if they pledged to refrain from political activities. The acceptance of this deal by a number of former leaders dealt another blow to the organization. By the early 1990s, the Muslim Brothers and the Islamic movement more generally in Syria were quiescent if not moribund.

MUTANABBI, ABU AL-TAYYIB AL- (915-965).

One of the great classical Arab poets, especially as a master panegyrist, he was born in the Iraqi city of Kufa and spent much of his adult life in Syria. Some accounts of his life hold that in his early years he claimed prophetic powers, hence the sobriquet "alMutannabi," he who claims to be a prophet; that he led a political-religious revolt in central Syria, for which he was imprisoned in Homs for two years; or that he was a partisan of the Qarmati Shi'i movement. It is more certain that like other poets of his age, Mutanabbi drifted from one court to another, celebrating his patrons' achievements in panegyric verse. He gained renown in Aleppo as court poet of the Hamdanid ruler Sayf al-Dawla from 948 until 957. During that time, Mutannabi wrote long odes and panegyrics praising his master's military campaigns against the Byzantines and Arab tribes. The poet, however, fell out of Sayf al-Dawla's favor, probably because of his rivals' plotting against him, and for the next several years he moved from court to court between Cairo and Iran, until he was finally killed in a bedouin attack on a caravan.

Critics have observed that Mutanabbi's poetry is distinctive for its Arab chauvinism, religious skepticism and pessimism. His style shifted from a neoclassical manner to spontaneous and personal moods until his mature poems showed a synthesis of the neoclassical with a freer style.

N

NAHLAWI, ABD AL-KARIM. (1926-).

Lieutenant-Colonel Nahlawi led the September 1961 coup to bring about Syria's secession from the United Arab Republic. Nahlawi and his army colleagues designated a civilian government to be headed by the conservative Ma'mun al-Kuzbari, and then stepped out of the political limelight while seeking to maintain supervision over the government, in particular blocking any moves to relax the strict controls over political life imposed by the UAR. On 28 March 1962, Nahlawi organized a coup against a conservative government that was repealing socialist legislation and criticizing officers for meddling in politics. He ordered the arrest of President Nazim al-Qudsi and Prime Minister Ma'ruf al-Dawalibi as well as other cabinet members and several parliamentary deputies. Then officers opposed to Nahlawi rose up in Homs and Aleppo. The affair ended with the decision taken at a meeting of officers held at Homs to exile Nahlawi and six others to Switzerland. In January 1963 Nahlawi and other exiled officers crossed the Turkish border back into Syria and incited junior officers to demand the restoration of union with Egypt. Again he failed to gain support from many other officers and he went back into exile.

NATIONAL BLOC.

The major nationalist party of the French Mandate era, it was conceived at a conference of political leaders in Beirut in October 1927. The National Bloc was formally established at the Homs Congress of November 1932. While its leadership was officially committed to the unity and independence of Syria, its short-term goal was to obtain a share in governing the country, a constitutional parliamentary form of government, and a treaty with France. The Bloc was the most broadly representative nationalist movement of the interwar period, with leaders from each of the major cities: Damascus, Aleppo, Homs, and Hama. The Bloc represented a more moderate approach to achieving national aspirations than had the Iron Hand Society or the

People's Party, an approach dictated by France's success in totally suppressing the Great Revolt in 1927.

Although it won just twenty-two of seventy seats to the constituent assembly in 1928 elections, the Bloc's confident, articulate representatives managed to dominate the assembly's proceedings and its committee to draft a constitution. Because this document contained articles the French found unacceptable, French High Commissioner Henri Ponsot adjourned the assembly. In 1930 France promulgated a constitution, and even though it fell short of the Bloc's demands, its leaders decided to participate in national parliamentary elections in 1931-1932. This willingness to compromise reflected the attitude of Jamil Mardam, who headed the National Bloc government that came to power in 1936 seeking to secure French ratification of the Franco-Syrian Treaty. This was the first nationalist government since Amir Faysal's fall sixteen years earlier. During its three-year tenure, the nationalist government suffered a number of severe political failures: the loss of Alexandretta to Turkey; the refusal of French parliament to ratify the treaty; and resistance to nationalist rule by areas heavily populated by non-Sunnis: Jabal Druze, Jabal Ansariyya, and Jazira. The government's failure led to Mardam's fall from party leadership and the ascent of his rival Shukri al-Quwwatli. In 1943, Quwwatli dissolved the Bloc and formed its successor, the National Party, to contest national elections.

NATIONAL PARTY.

Created on the eve of independent Syria's first national elections in July 1943 as the successor to the National Bloc, the National Party headed by Shukri al-Quwwatli led the final push for complete unfettered independence. The party swept the July 1943 elections and brought to power a cabinet headed by Sa'dallah al-Jabiri as prime minister; parliament then elected Quwwatli president. Lacking an ideological program or an organizational framework, the National Party resembled the Bloc in representing the personal influence of prominent men. Nonetheless, it stayed in power during Syria's difficult transition to liberation from French domination, enduring France's May 1945 bombardment of

Damascus and overseeing the final evacuation of French troops in April 1946. The National Party won national elections for a second time in July 1947, but the party's days as a powerful force were numbered. It had the misfortune to hold office during the Palestine War of 1948, in which the armies of several Arab countries proved unable to prevent the establishment of a Jewish state, Israel, in what had recently been an Arab land. Husni al-Za'im's coup in March 1949 ended nearly six years of National Party domination, and the colonel forced its leaders to leave the country.

During the next five years of military domination, the party moved into the opposition, while its rival, the People's Party, intermittently gained the confidence of military strongmen. The National Party orchestrated strikes and demonstrations in September 1950 to protest an attempt by the Constituent Assembly, dominated by the People's Party, to convert itself into a four-year parliament. When democracy returned after the Adib al-Shishakli dictatorship, the National Party was far weaker, yet in 1954 its new leader, Sabri al-Asali, formed a coalition government with the People's Party. But both parties, representing the political elite inherited from Ottoman times, spent the next four years fending off the rising leftist current represented by the Ba'th Party and the Syrian Communist Party, and feuding with each other. The National Party practically self-destructed when it divided into factions for and against union with Iraq. By the time Syria entered the United Arab Republic with Egypt in 1958, the National Party was a shadow of the organization that had guided the country to independence.

NATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY COMMAND COUNCIL (NRCC).

Following the March 8, 1963 coup, Syria's new military masters created this ruling body as the executive authority. At first, the members were all officers, including Ziyad al-Hariri and Salah al-Jadid. The NRCC was to formulate policy and delegate its implementation to a cabinet of ministers responsible to the NRCC. The provisional constitution of April 1964 passed the NRCC's executive functions to a Presidential Council.

NEO-BA'TH.

Radical faction of the Syrian Ba'th Party that emerged during the first Ba'thist regime of 1963 to 1966. It included the Military Committee and the "regionalists," younger, more radical civilians and military officers, largely members of religious minorities and Sunnis from the provinces. In 1965, these radicals came to dominate the Syrian Regional Command of the party. In response, the moderate National Command under Michel Aflaq announced the Regional Command's dissolution on 19 December 1965 and dismissed neo-Ba'thists from government. In the February 23, 1966 coup, neo-Ba'thist officers led by Salah al-Jadid seized power and purged the army and government of more than four hundred men.

While Jadid was the regime's strongman, as an Alawi he preferred to manage affairs from behind the scenes, and he appointed two Sunni medical doctors of the party's regionalist faction to assume the high offices of state. Accordingly, Nur al-Din al-Atasi became head of state (the office of president was abolished) and Yusuf al-Zu'ayyin became prime minister. In general, though, the regime effected a thorough purge of Sunnis identified with the families that had dominated Syrian politics for several generations. The neo-Ba'th pursued a radical agenda in reforming the Syrian economy, ranging from state control over industry and trade to attempts to restructure agrarian relations and production through land reform. Its positive achievements include beginning construction of the Tabqa Dam on the Euphrates River to increase the amount of land under cultivation and electrical power. In part because of the regime's radicalism, in part because of its lack of a popular base, the neo-Ba'thists relied on support from the Syrian Communist Party. When the regime brought a communist onto the cabinet, this brought an increase in aid from the Soviet Union.

In regional foreign relations the regime sought the overthrow of nearly every Arab regime, particularly the monarchies of Jordan and Saudi Arabia, so those two countries gave comfort and aid to the regime's many Syrian enemies living in exile. On the other hand, the neo-Ba'th made overtures to Egypt's Gamal Abd al-Nasir and the two

countries restored official relations. Support for Palestinian guerrilla groups emerged as another hallmark of the regime, but Palestinian raids triggered retaliation by Israel. This border violence created a dangerous situation along the demilitarized zones, where limited conflict could easily escalate. This was Nasir's fear when he arranged a defense pact with Syria in the expectation that it would give him some leverage and prevent Israel from attacking Syria, in which event he would have to go to war. But a military clash between Syria and Israel in May 1967 and the ensuing steps taken by Nasir to demonstrate support for his ally led to the June 1967 war, which was a disaster for the regime.

After the war, a split in the leadership appeared between Minister of Defense Hafiz al-Asad and Salah al-Jadid. The former wanted to concentrate Syria's resources and energies on a military buildup in order to effectively confront Israel in the quest to regain the Golan Heights that were lost in the war. Jadid preferred a continuation of the regime's policies, including revolution at home and in the Arab world. Matters came to a head in February 1969 when units loyal to Asad seized control of the national media and all sensitive commands. Jadid retained control of the Ba'th Party, and on 30 October 1970 he convened an emergency national party congress that announced Asad's dismissal from the party and the government. But Asad ignored the decree and two weeks later launched his corrective movement in which he completed his takeover of the country and ended the neoBa'th's rule.

NESTORIAN.

Also known as the East Syrian church. It dates to the second century. Christian opponents named them after a fifth-century patriarch of Constantinople, Nestorius, who stressed Jesus Christ's humanity. In 431, the Council of Ephesus declared his views heresy and stripped him of office. Nonetheless, Nestorius' teachings gained a wide following in Syria and Mesopotamia. In subsequent centuries, Nestorian Christians were important in proselytizing deep into Asia as far as China. In the history of ideas, Nestorian scholars were important for their many Syriac translations of Greek

philosophy from which Arabic translations were made. Modern followers of this church are known as Assyrians, and they still use their own Syriac liturgy.

NIZARI.

A branch of Isma'ili Shi'is more commonly but improperly known as the Assassins, a name derived from the Arabic word for users of hashish, *hashashiyyun*. It seems that their Sunni enemies accused Nizari leaders of manipulating followers by having them consume hashish. The Nizaris frequently resorted to political murder against Sunni rulers and religious officials. European Crusaders then circulated tales of fanatical Nizari agents under the influence of a magical potion carrying out their masters' orders to murder their enemies, so the name "hashashiyyun" passed into western usage as Assassins.

The Nizaris emerged in the late eleventh century in the course of a succession dispute among the Isma'ili Fatimid dynasty of Egypt. In 1094 the Fatimid caliph al-Mustansir died, leaving two sons, Nizar and al-Musta'li, to contend for succession. The military chief, who was the power behind the throne, selected the younger, more compliant Musta'li, and Nizar launched a revolt. His bid for power failed and he was put to death. Nizar's followers, however, gained the support of the powerful and persuasive Hasan-i Sabbah, who ruled over a network of Isma'ili mountain strongholds in Iran and formed a distinct branch of the sect called the New Preaching.

In Iran the Isma'ilis' chief adversary was the Saljuk sultanate, and several high ministers met their ends at the hands of Nizari agents. In the early 1100s, Hasan-i Sabbah sent agents to Syria to organize the New Preaching among Isma'ilis there. At that time Saljuk rule was fragmenting among princes of the ruling house, and the Crusaders had just established their principalities along the Syrian coast. For about thirty years, the Saljuk princes of Aleppo and Damascus countenanced Nizari activities and tried to use them to further their own ambitions. Iranian Nizari missionaries worked to spread the New Preaching under Saljuk protection but made little headway. When the Saljuk prince of Aleppo died in 1113, his successor suppressed the Nizaris in that city,

but in the 1120s, they managed to establish good relations with the ruler of Damascus, the atabeg Tughtigin. As in Aleppo, however, the Nizaris' dependence on relations with a single individual made their standing tenuous, and following Tughtigin's death in 1128, his successor, Buri, incited a mob to massacre several thousand Nizaris. In 1131, Nizari agents from Iran avenged their martyrs by murdering Buri.

With the failure to secure themselves in Syria's main cities, the Nizaris repeated the formula that had worked in Iran—that is, establishing fortresses in remote mountain areas, in this case the rugged Jabal Ansariyya in northwest Syria. Between 1132 and 1141 they obtained by conquest and negotiation several strongholds, including Masyaf and Qadmus, that became the nuclei for Nizari power for the next century. The Syrian Nizaris, then, comprised part of a larger Nizari polity based in northern Iran at the impregnable mountain fortress of Alamut near the Caspian Sea. The noncontiguous Nizari state included holdings in northwest Syria and western, northern, and eastern Iran. The Nizari ruler at Alamut was recognized as the supreme authority throughout this vast realm, and Nizari chiefs in Syria were always Persians sent by Alamut.

In the twelfth century, the Nizaris became bitter enemies of the atabegs Zangi and Nur al-Din as well as of Saladin, founder of the Ayyubid dynasty. The Nizaris reached the pinnacle of their influence in Syria under Rashid al-Din Sinan, who was their chief from 1162 until 1193. He twice tried to assassinate Saladin, in 1175 and 1176. Following the second attempt, the Ayyubid ruler invaded Jabal Ansariyya and besieged Masyaf, the chief Nizari stronghold, but failed to take it. By the early thirteenth century, relations between the Nizaris and Ayyubids had improved and they cooperated in warfare against Frankish enemies. The overthrow of the Ayyubids by the much more powerful Mamluks, however, drastically altered the Nizaris' prospects. In the 1260s, Sultan Baybars demanded and received tribute from them and then seized control of their mountain fortresses between 1271 and 1273, thereby extinguishing the independent Nizari state.

NUR AL-DIN MAHMUD (r. 1146-1174).

Son of Imad al-Din al-Zangi, the atabeg of northern Syria and northern Iraq, Nur al-Din became the ruler of northern Syria upon Zangi's murder in 1146. He is renowned as an energetic leader of military campaigns against the Crusader states of Antioch and Jerusalem as well as against rival Muslim rulers. In 1154 he joined his northern Syrian domain to the south by conquering Damascus, thereby bringing the country under local unified control for the first time since the fall of the Umayyad dynasty four hundred years before. Nur al-Din also made Damascus an important political capital for the first time since the Umayyads. He fortified the city's defenses and patronized Sunni religious institutions, including al-Adiliyya madrasa, which in the early twentieth century housed the Arab Academy, a historical and literary research institute.

Having secured his position in Damascus, Nur al-Din spent the following years struggling to impose his authority on rulers of petty states in central and southern Syria in addition to frequent campaigns against the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem. A new field of ambition opened up in 1163 when a palace revolt forced out the vizier, or chief minister, of the Fatimid dynasty in Egypt. This man, Shawar, went to Damascus to ask Nur al-Din to restore him to power in exchange for annual tribute and control over one of Egypt's rich agricultural districts. The following year, Nur al-Din's Kurdish vassal, Shirkuh, invaded and briefly occupied Egypt. Shirkuh brought along a nephew, Saladin, who became governor of Alexandria. The threat of attack by the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem on Egypt led Nur al-Din to again dispatch Shirkuh in 1168; this time he stayed, only to die several months later. Leadership of the expedition then passed to Saladin, who laid the foundations of Ayyubid rule in Egypt and brought about the end of the Fatimid dynasty in 1171. Nur al-Din then became alarmed at the potential threat represented by Saladin should the vassal decide to extend his rule to Damascus. Nur al-Din was preparing to attack Saladin in Egypt when his death in 1174 prevented conflict. Some writers emphasize Nur al-Din's contributions to the political revival of Sunni Islam in Egypt and Syria. For instance, he ordered his vassal Saladin

to suppress the Isma'ili Fatimid caliphate; and he ordered the construction of eleven madrasas in Damascus and seven in Aleppo.

NUSAYRI. See ALAWI.

O

OCTOBER 1973 WAR.

Also known as the Ramadan War to Arabs and the Yom Kippur War to Israelis. On 6 October, Syria and Egypt launched a surprise attack on Israel in order to recover the Golan Heights and the Sinai Peninsula, both of which had been lost in the June 1967 war. At the outset, Syrian forces broke through Israeli defenses on the Golan Heights and advanced to within a few kilometers of the Israeli border. On 9 October, however, the Syrian offensive ran out of steam in the face of stiff Israeli resistance, which inflicted high casualties on the attacking forces. In order to hamper the delivery of military supplies from the Soviet Union, Israel's air force attacked airport runways in Damascus and Aleppo in addition to Syria's main ports.

Egyptian forces had also scored early victories against Israel, most notably the unexpected feat of crossing to the east bank of the Suez Canal in the face of Israel's imposing network of defensive installations. When Egypt slowed its offensive in the Sinai Peninsula, however, Israel was able to mobilize its forces for a massive counterattack against the Syrians on 11-13 October. The Israeli offensive advanced several kilometers beyond the 1967 cease-fire line, but failed to capture a village on the road to Damascus that would have brought the Syrian capital within artillery range. When Israel's military leaders felt they had a secure situation in the north, they turned their attention to the Egyptian front. Between 14 and 23 October, Israeli forces turned back an Egyptian attempt to advance farther and then launched a counterattack across the Suez Canal. On 22 October, the parties agreed to abide by a cease-fire resolution passed by the United Nations Security Council, but Israeli troops on the west bank of the Suez Canal pressed their advantage for the next

two days as they tried to completely encircle portions of the Egyptian army on the canal's east bank. The Soviet Union then threatened to intervene directly, and this led the United States to exert pressure on Israel to abide by the cease-fire. At war's end, Syria had lost about 3,500 soldiers, Israel some 2,800, and Egypt 5,000 in fighting that included some of the largest tank battles in history.

ORONTES RIVER.

Al-Asi in Arabic; this river begins in the northern Bekaa valley in Lebanon just north of Baalbak and then meanders northward through a number of lakes and marshes. The Orontes is the main waterway in central Syria and the region's main cities, Homs and Hama, are situated along its banks. North of Hama it turns northwest before heading west toward the Mediterranean Sea where it empties south of Antioch.

OTTOMAN EMPIRE.

Ruled Syria from 1516 until 1918. The dynasty first rose in northwestern Asia Minor in the 1320s. Border fighting with the Mamluks began in the 1480s along the Syrian/Asia Minor frontier. In August 1516, Sultan Selim I led Ottoman forces, armed with artillery and other gunpowder weapons, to victory over the Mamluks near Aleppo. In the context of the enormous Ottoman Empire, Syria was reduced to the status of a minor province, but it held importance for the Ottomans' religious legitimacy because it was the staging point for the annual pilgrimage to Mecca. For the next sixty years, Ottoman authority was firmly established, but in the last three decades of the sixteenth century, Istanbul's hold weakened, and local forces centered on the janissaries asserted themselves against Ottoman governors in Aleppo and Damascus. This contest continued throughout the seventeenth century and into the eighteenth century until the Ottomans found reliable allies in the powerful Azm clan to serve as governors. For several decades, members of the Azm clan brought stability to much of Syria. The tendency to rely on local figures to govern Syria continued in the late 1700s and early 1800s under Ahmad al-Jazzar.

By the early 1800s, the Ottoman Empire faced threats to its existence from European powers and disarray within as conservative forces fended off attempts to reform the empire's administrative and military institutions. In Syria the Ottomans were shocked by the 1831-1832 invasion launched by Muhammad Ali of Egypt. The Ottomans did not recover the province until 1840, and then only with the assistance of the European powers. The rest of the nineteenth century saw a sustained effort to strengthen the empire's ability to defend itself and to control its lands and population. This drive for administrative and military modernization took place under both secular direction (see TANZIMAT) and religious leadership (see ABDULHAMID).

In 1908, Ottoman officers belonging to the Committee of Union and Progress launched a mutiny to force the sultan to institute constitutional government, thereby shifting power at the center of the empire from the sultan to a group of officers and bureaucrats. The new rulers promoted cultural policies that many Syrians construed as anti-Arab, and in reaction the Arab nationalist movement developed. The Ottoman Empire's leaders entered World War I on the side of Germany against Great Britain and France. The disastrous defeat of Ottoman forces at the end of the war terminated four centuries of Ottoman rule in Syria.

OTTOMAN LAND CODE OF 1858.

During the Tanzimat era the Ottoman Empire embarked on an ambitious program to thoroughly reform its legal framework. The 1858 land code was a milestone not only in the empire's legal reform but also in the history of land tenure in much of the Middle East. It established a land registry office to issue deeds, thereby formalizing long-standing property claims. The main effect of the code in Syria was to foster the rise of a class of absentee landowners among urban notables who exploited their control over credit and knowledge of land registration procedures to accumulate vast holdings. Their efforts were facilitated by peasants' apprehension that registration of their property could make it easier for the authorities to tax and conscript them. Consequently, many peasants registered the lands they

cultivated in the names of urban notables; others became ensnared in debt to urban creditors and gave up their lands to lighten their debt. By the early 1900s, Sunni landowners of Damascus, Aleppo, Homs, Hama, and Latakia thoroughly dominated the Syrian countryside and used their agrarian wealth to become the leading economic stratum in the country. Furthermore, their wealth enabled them to play the leading part in politics for nearly a century until the land reforms of the United Arab Republic and Ba'th Party regimes wiped out the effects of the 1858 code and undermined agrarian base of their power.

OTTOMAN PARTY OF ADMINISTRATIVE DECENTRALIZATION.

Established in Cairo in January 1913 to promote the cause of provincial autonomy in the Ottoman Empire's Arab regions. This short-lived party, largely composed of Syrian emigres living in Cairo, opposed the Committee of Union and Progress regime's centralist policies that tightened Istanbul's hold on the provinces. The party joined with other groups in convening an Arab Congress in Paris in June 1913. Members of the congress issued the only formal public declarations of the Ottoman period claiming to represent the interests of the Arabs to the Ottoman rulers. Its resolutions specifically favored administrative decentralization and the use of Arabic in provincial administration. The Ottoman government responded with indications of willingness to grant some demands, but eventually adopted a strong policy against the Arab autonomists.

P

PALESTINE.

During the Ottoman era, Palestine was part of the province of Damascus and had strong economic, cultural, and social ties with Syria. When the European powers separated Palestine from Syria at the end of World War I, nationalists in both countries fought for the reintegration of southern Syria, that is Palestine. Throughout the French Mandate era, the Syrian and Palestinian nationalist movements supported

each other. The first major demonstration of Syrian popular sympathy for the Palestine Arab cause was sparked by the latter's 1936 revolt against Zionist immigration and the British Mandate. Syrians launched strikes and demonstrations, donated funds, smuggled weapons, and recruited fighters in support of the revolt. See PALESTINE WAR OF 1948.

PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION.

Between its foundation in 1964 and 1968, when guerrilla groups took control, the Palestine Liberation Organization was essentially an instrument of Egyptian foreign policy. During that period, Syria was at odds with Egypt; consequently, Syria supported Yasir Arafat's Fatah organization, then independent of the PLO, and helped Fatah launch raids against Israel beginning in 1965. There was a brief breakdown in relations between Fatah and the neo-Ba'th regime in 1966, but for the most part Syria supported Fatah before and well after the June 1967 war. During the September 1970 conflict between Palestinians and the government of Jordan, Syria sided with the PLO, and Syria supported the PLO's establishment of new headquarters in Lebanon following its expulsion from Jordan.

In Lebanon's weak polity the PLO developed a firm base of power that allowed it greater independence of action. When PLO actions did not coincide with Syrian interests, clashes ensued. During the Lebanese Civil War, the PLO decided to support Lebanese groups seeking to radically alter Lebanon's political system. Syria on the other hand opposed those groups and consequently clashed with the PLO in the summer of 1976. The following year the two sides mended fences under the impetus of Maronite efforts to obtain support from Israel and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's visit to Jerusalem. Israel's March 1978 invasion of south Lebanon further consolidated Syrian-PLO relations. The aftermath of Israel's invasion that launched the Lebanese War of 1982, however, led to rupture between Syria and the PLO. The PLO sought to reconsolidate its position in northern Lebanon in order to regain some of its independence. Syria then supported a mutiny within Fatah against Yasir Arafat. At the end of 1983, Arafat and forces loyal to him were expelled

from Tripoli by Syrian-backed Palestinians. Tensions between the PLO and Syria persisted as the former strove to find a way to participate in diplomatic efforts sponsored by the United States to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict that neglected Syria. For the latter, the fundamental concern was to prevent any further progress on Arab-Israeli negotiations that did not address Israel's occupation of the Golan Heights.

Iraq's August 1990 invasion of Kuwait reshuffled regional relations as the PLO backed Saddam Husayn and Syria supported the American-led intervention. After the victory of coalition forces, both Syria and the PLO agreed to attend the December 1991 Madrid Conference, which led to negotiations between Israel and both parties. Relations again took a turn for the worse when the PLO struck a separate deal with Israel in the August 1993 Oslo Accords, thereby undermining Syria's strategy of presenting Israel with a unified Arab negotiating position.

PALESTINE WAR OF 1948.

On 29 November 1947, the United Nations General Assembly voted in favor of a resolution to partition Palestine into Jewish and Arab states. Public opinion in Syria vehemently opposed partition. A mass strike was held in Damascus, and huge crowds stormed the buildings housing the legation of the United States and cultural office of the Soviet Union because of their votes in favor of the UN resolution. Anti-Jewish riots in Aleppo destroyed hundreds of homes and eleven synagogues and killed more than seventy Jews. In the early months of 1948, Syrian volunteers began to enter Palestine in order to support Arab forces that were already fighting the Zionists and attacking Jewish settlements. As the 14 May deadline for British withdrawal from Palestine drew closer and Zionist military forces gained the upper hand, Arab public opinion pushed Arab leaders to plan armed intervention. The country's leaders, including Prime Minister Jamil Mardam, boasted that Arab armies would easily triumph. Syria contributed between 3,000 and 4,000 troops to the joint Arab cause, but they were poorly trained and equipped for the conflict.

When the British completed their withdrawal, the Zionists proclaimed the independent state of Israel, and Egypt, Transjordan, Lebanon, and Syria intervened in a bid to block partition. On 16 May, Syrian units entered northeastern Palestine, but most of the war's fighting centered on the Egyptian and Transjordanian fronts. During the phase of fighting before the first truce on 11 June, Syrian forces gained a foothold around Lake Huleh. Israel used the truce to obtain huge stores of arms and to mobilize more men, so that when fighting resumed on 8 July, its forces made large gains in central Palestine, but not against the Syrians, who managed to enlarge their hold in the northeast. As the war wound down in December, Syrian forces occupied small portions of Palestine that became demilitarized zones.

Syrian popular opinion had been led to expect a quick and easy victory, and Israel's military successes prompted widespread anger at the government for its incompetence. The ensuing political turmoil was a key factor in Colonel Husni al-Za'im's 30 March 1949 military coup. The new regime agreed to a permanent cease-fire on 13 April 1949, and the two parties signed the Armistice of 1949 on 20 July.

PALESTINIANS.

During the Palestine War of 1948, more than 700,000 Palestinians became refugees in neighboring Arab countries. This mass exodus was caused by a combination of expulsions by Israel's forces and flight from wartime dangers. While the bulk of refugees settled in the West Bank, Gaza, and Transjordan, about 90,000 Palestinians went to Syria. The government created a special administration for settling and providing aid to Palestinians at six camps located in Damascus, Aleppo, Homs, Hama, and Dar'a. After the June 1967 war, a fresh wave of Palestinian refugees arrived and four more camps were established.

The status of Palestinians has been governed by piecemeal legislation, mostly passed between 1949 and 1956, that granted them employment rights not held by other nonSyrian residents. For instance, Palestinians can work in the civil service and the modern professions. Moreover, the government has allowed them open access to public education

through the university level. These legal provisions and the Palestinians' proportionately small numbers in the overall population have enabled them to integrate into the Syrian economy and society. Consequently, around 70 percent of the Palestinians no longer reside in refugee camps but have moved into nearby cities, even though their numbers have grown to 250,000. The Palestinians have not been free to pursue independent political activities; rather, successive Syrian regimes, particularly since the 1960s, have strictly controlled Palestinian politics on Syrian soil.

PEOPLE'S PARTY.

Two distinct parties have existed under this name. The first was established by Abd al-Rahman Shahbandar in June 1925 to promote the establishment of a constitutional regime in a unified Syria that would include Palestine, Transjordan, and portions of Lebanon. It was the first legal nationalist party under the French Mandate. The People's Party was active for only a brief period, during which it abetted the spread of the Great Revolt of 1925-1927. The French suppressed the party during that revolt. In its short history, the People's Party attracted members of the urban elite: wealthy landowner politicians, merchants, and educated professionals. It also enjoyed the financial support of the Syrian-Palestine Congress in Cairo.

The second People's Party formed in 1948 in opposition to the National Party. Both parties had roots in the National Bloc, but regional and personal rivalries tore the Bloc apart, and former members from Syria's northern cities, Aleppo, Homs, and Hama, established the new People's Party. Former National Bloc members included Hashim al-Atasi and Nazim al-Qudsi. In general the party represented northern and central Syrian business and landowning interests in favor of economic union with Iraq, whose northern regions were historically important to the trade of northern Syria.

The party reached the peak of its influence from 1949 to 1951 under the military regimes of Sami al-Hinnawi and Adib al-Shishakli. It received a strong plurality of votes in November 1949 elections, and engaged in a duel with Shishakli over control of the gendarmerie and the army.

Shishakli decisively won this struggle with his 28 November 1951 coup against the elected government and arrest of leading members of the party. People's Party leaders were among those who plotted Shishakli's overthrow two years later, and they regained some of their influence by taking over prominent cabinet posts and gaining a plurality of seats in the parliament elected in September 1954. But the next few years saw Syrian politics drift to the left, and the People's Party was unable to effectively combine with other conservative forces to stop that tendency.

PETROLEUM.

A German company found the first commercially significant oil deposit in Jabal Druze near Suwayda in 1959, but the company did not receive a concession to develop the field. The Ba'th Party government nationalized petroleum in 1964 and created the General Petroleum Authority, but oil exports had to await construction of a pipeline to Tartus from the northeast oil fields in 1968. Syrian production did not take off until the regime of Hafiz al-Asad offered foreign firms better concessionary terms to encourage exploration. The result was the discovery of several new fields in the desert near Dayr al-Zur and a doubling of production from 1974 to 1980. In 1987, western firms opened production in more new fields discovered in northeastern Syria. Output has increased from 162,000 barrels per day in 1985 to 560,000 barrels per day in 1993. These quantities suffice for domestic consumption and a surplus is exported. By the end of 1994, production reached 600,000 barrels per day, enough to bring in 70 percent of the country's export earnings. At that rate, though, existing reserves, estimated at 1.8 billion barrels, would be depleted by 2002. The Syrian government is encouraging foreign companies to explore for new oil fields near the borders of Turkey and Iraq. Apart from petroleum, Syria has modest reserves of natural gas in exportable quantities in the desert near Palmyra and in Jazira.

Q

QABBANI, NIZAR (1923-).

A leading contemporary poet. Qabbani is best known for his early erotic collections of the 1940s and 1950s. The frank treatment of a young man's sexual desire and descriptions of women as objects of that desire made Qabbani a frequent center of controversy. At the same time that he was publishing his first collections of poetry, Qabbani worked in the Syrian foreign ministry and held diplomatic posts in the Middle East, Europe, and Asia. In 1954 his poem "Bread, Hashish, and Moon" expressed a searing critique of Arab culture for its ignorance and backwardness, and once again conservative critics poured scorn on him for betraying cherished cultural values. Qabbani quit the Syrian foreign service and moved to Lebanon in 1966. Since the enormous Arab defeat in the June 1967 war, Qabbani's poems have shifted emphasis to deal more with political and social concerns. Both his love poetry and critical compositions are widely known in the Arab world.

QAHTAN SOCIETY.

In 1909 a few Syrians living in Istanbul formed this small secret society to defend Arab rights against what its members perceived as the Committee of Union and Progress's campaign to "turkify" the Ottoman Empire's administration. The society sought the transformation of the empire into a dual monarchy similar to the Austro-Hungarian empire.

QARMATI.

Isma'ili Shi'i sect named for Hamdan Qarmat, who preached among the peasants of southern Iraq in the 870s and directed other preachers to spread Isma'ili teachings among bedouin tribes in the Syrian and north Arabian deserts. In 899 the Qarmatis split from the Isma'ilis who followed the leadership of Ubayd Allah when he claimed to be the imam. The Qarmatis held that the line of imams had already ended and that the seventh imam would soon return as the *mahdi*. Ten years later Ubayd Allah's movement established an Isma'ili caliphate in North Africa and founded the Fatimid dynasty. In the meantime, bedouin tribes under Qarmati

leadership attacked and briefly occupied Damascus, Homs, and Hama between 902 and 906. Counterattacks by forces loyal to the Abbasid caliph in Baghdad drove the Qarmatis from the Syrian desert, but they created a separate state in the region of Bahrain in eastern Arabia. Hamdan Qarmat disappeared in Iraq shortly thereafter.

While the Qarmati state consolidated itself in Bahrain, the Fatimids built up their power in North Africa and prepared for the conquest of Egypt, which they achieved in 969. Qarmati armies became active in Syria again in the 960s with attacks on Damascus, towns in Palestine, and even Egypt. One year before the Fatimid invasion of Syria, Qarmati forces from Bahrain occupied Damascus, thus setting the stage for a violent confrontation between two wings of the same Shi'i sect. For ten years, Qarmati and Fatimid armies struggled for domination over southern Syria. First a Fatimid force seized Damascus in 970, but the following year the Qarmatis formed an alliance with the Hamdanids of Aleppo and the Buyid princes of Baghdad and regained the city. The Qarmatis' dependence on tribal forces unwilling to permanently settle in a city, however, meant they could not hold on to Damascus. In 971 and 974 the Qarmatis carried the offensive into Egypt, laying siege to Cairo, the new capital of Egypt founded by the Fatimids. Finally the Fatimids dealt the Qarmatis a decisive defeat in 978, and drove them out of Syria permanently. The Qarmati state in Bahrain, however, survived for yet another century.

QASIMI, JAMAL AL-DIN (1866-1914).

The leading figure in the salafiyya movement of the early twentieth century. Qasimi was the prayer leader at the Sinaniyya Mosque in Damascus, the second most prestigious mosque in the city. He was a prolific writer in various fields of religious knowledge, history, and contemporary affairs. The central themes in his works were the fundamental rationality of Islam and the need for Muslims to overcome divisions between followers of different legal schools. Qasimi believed that Muslims would remain backward in relation to Europe until they rediscovered Islam's true nature as a religion that is based on reason so that

it encourages a positive attitude toward science and technical progress. With respect to divisions among Muslims, he argued that it was necessary to return to Islam's sources (the Qur'an and the tradition of the Prophet) to provide a common ground and to abandon beliefs and practices that had developed over the long course of Muslim history but were not part of Islam's essence.

More conservative ulama attacked Qasimi's ideas because they represented a strong criticism of their own view of Islam. Consequently, on several occasions they stirred the Ottoman authorities to harass him and they incited mobs against him. Although Qasimi did not win a wide following in his lifetime, twentieth-century salafis hold him in the highest regard and his works continue to circulate among reformist Muslims in the Arab world.

QAWUQJI, FAWZI AL- (1887-1976).

He was a captain in the Syrian Legion, created by France as the core of a national army, when the Great Revolt against the French Mandate broke out in July 1925. In early October, Qawuqji led mutinous soldiers and bedouin in an uprising against the French presence in Hama. A few days later, French aerial bombardment spearheaded a counterattack to secure the town and drive the rebels into the countryside, where Qawuqji continued to lead rebel efforts until the end of the revolt nearly two years later. He then fled to Iraq. He entered the spotlight again during the Palestine Revolt of 1936 to 1939, when he led Syrian volunteers who went to Palestine to fight British and Zionist forces. In the months preceding the 1948 partition of Palestine and the Palestine War of 1948, Qawuqji also led a militia of Arab volunteers called the Arab Liberation Army.

QUDSI, NAZIM AL- (1906-).

Nationalist lawyer from Aleppo who was active in the National Bloc's radical Aleppan faction during the French Mandate. In the independence period, Qudsi grew estranged from the National Party leadership, and on the eve of 1947 elections, he and other Aleppan dignitaries formed the Liberal Party. A few months later, Qudsi

participated in the creation of a broader opposition party, the second People's Party. During Sami al-Hinnawi's brief rule in 1949, Prime Minister Hashim al-Atasi formed a government dominated by the People's Party and named Qudsi minister of foreign affairs. The Atasi government wanted to create a new constitutional order for Syria, so it decided to hold elections for a constituent assembly. In the September 1949 elections, the People's Party gained a plurality, and the assembly named Qudsi to head a committee to draft a new constitution. The draft document underwent some modification when the assembly debated its articles, and it was ratified in September 1950. Meanwhile, Adib al-Shishakli had seized power the previous December and in June 1950 he chose Qudsi to form a government. As prime minister, he faced strong opposition from the National Party and was frustrated by the army's encroachment on civilian control over the gendarmerie, yet he did achieve the first nationalizations of French and British utility companies before he resigned in March 1951.

After the dissolution of the United Arab Republic in September 1961, the People's Party gained the largest bloc of seats in national elections, and its leader, Qudsi, became president of the Syrian Arab Republic. At the time of the abortive coups d'etat of March-April 1962, Qudsi was placed under arrest for two weeks but was then restored to office. The March 8, 1963 coup, however, swept him from power. The National Revolutionary Command Council then formally stripped him of his civil rights and imprisoned him until the end of the year.

QUNAYTRA.

In 1873 Russia's conquests in the Caucasus Mountains triggered the flight of Circassian refugees to the Ottoman Empire. The Turkish authorities resettled them on the Golan Heights, where they established Qunaytra and other villages nearby. In 1967 it was a town of 17,000. Israel occupied Qunaytra during the June 1967 war and forced the population to flee, leaving it a ghost town for several years. After the October 1973 war, the 1974 disengagement agreement stipulated that Israel return Qunaytra to Syria. Before

withdrawing, Israeli troops systematically dynamited houses, both those damaged in the two wars and those that had escaped harm. The destruction of Qunaytra further poisoned Syrian attitudes toward Israel.

QUWWATLI, SHUKRI AL- (1891-1967).

A leading nationalist during the French Mandate and president for nine of Syria's first fifteen years of independence. Quwwatli joined al-Fatat during World War I and supported the Arab Revolt; for his nationalist activities, the Ottomans imprisoned him. During Amir Faysal's brief reign, Quwwatli was active in the nationalist Istiqlal Party. When France occupied Syria in 1920, he fled to Egypt, where he joined the Syrian-Palestine Congress. He spent the next ten years in exile, like many other nationalists the French considered too dangerous to allow back into Syria. In 1930, however, France issued a general amnesty and Quwwatli returned. He reentered the political arena in 1932 when he joined the National Bloc, and he soon became the head of the more radical faction that challenged party chief Jamil Mardam's leadership. In 1936, Quwwatli was elected to parliament and Mardam named him minister of defense and finance. Mardam's leadership of the National Bloc government failed to advance Syrian nationalist goals, and in 1939 Quwwatli defeated him in a contest for leadership of the Bloc.

When elections were held in July 1943 for Syria's first independent government, Quwwatli was elected president. His tenure saw the final evacuation of French forces and the eruption of the Palestine War of 1948. Syria's poor performance in the conflict contributed to Husni al-Za'im's military coup of March 1949 that ended Quwwatli's presidency. He then moved to Egypt as he had nearly thirty years before.

After Shishakli's overthrow, he returned to Syria in August 1954 to boost the National Party's election campaign. In September 1955, Quwwatli again became president, but with far less authority than before. He led Syria through crises over the Baghdad Pact, the Suez War, the conspiracy of 1956, military threats by Turkey, and finally unity talks

with Egypt. Quwwatli's last political act was to resign as president of Syria in order to allow Gamal Abd al-Nasir to assume the presidency of the United Arab Republic.

R

RAILWAYS. See TRANSPORTATION.

RIDA, MUHAMMAD RASHID (1865-1935).

Syrian-born writer who spent most of his life in Egypt (from 1897 to 1935). Rida is best known as publisher of *al-Manar*, a periodical devoted to religious reform, which he edited from 1898 until his death in 1935. In addition to issuing what was arguably the most influential Arabic Muslim journal of the twentieth century, Rida's essays and articles contributed to the elaboration of thought in the salafiyya reform movement, particularly his writings on legal and educational reform. He also contributed a seminal work on the Islamic state in the early 1920s. The timing of this work was critical, as it came out shortly before Turkey abolished the caliphate, the 1,300-year-old institution representing Muslim political authority.

In the arena of Syrian political life, Rida was an early critic of the Committee of Union and Progress's policies, perhaps because of their secular bias, and he participated in the Ottoman Party for Administration Decentralization, which supported greater autonomy for the Arab provinces. After World War I, Rida returned to Syria, supported the ephemeral regime of Amir Faysal, and presided over the Syrian Congress of 1920. When France crushed Faysal's state, Rida returned to Cairo and in the early years of the French Mandate served as vice president of the SyrianPalestine Congress executive committee.

S

SA'ADA, ANTUN AL- (1904-1949).

Founder of the Syrian Social National Party, he was born to a Greek Orthodox Lebanese family. Sa'ada's father emigrated to Brazil during World War I, and Antun moved there in 1920. While in Brazil,

Sa'ada developed his ideas about Syrian nationalism. In 1929, Sa'ada returned to Lebanon, and in November 1932 formed the SSNP, originally called the Syrian National Party. He kept the party secret and initially recruited among students at the American University of Beirut. As party membership grew, Sa'ada decided to compose a party constitution and a manifesto in 1934. When French Mandate authorities uncovered the party in November 1935, they arrested Sa'ada on charges of subversive activities and sentenced him to six months' imprisonment. Following his release, he began to recruit members in the Syrian province of Latakia and campaigned against Turkey's imminent annexation of Alexandretta. Sa'ada left Lebanon in 1938 to organize party cells among Syrian emigrants in Brazil, where he spent the next nine years.

While he was out of the country, SSNP members in Lebanon changed the party's name to the National Party and transformed it into a more conventional Lebanese party focusing on Lebanese political issues. When Sa'ada returned to Lebanon, he ousted the men responsible for this deviation and reestablished his status as the party's sole authority. His relations with the Lebanese government were always fraught with tension as the very essence of his political thought denied the legitimacy of an independent Lebanon. In June 1949 he and his party were charged with plotting to overthrow the government; he then fled to Damascus, where he plotted with Syria's military ruler Husni al-Za'im to bring down the Lebanese government. In July Sa'ada's followers launched a few minor attacks on remote police stations in Lebanon. Za'im then betrayed him by arresting and handing him over to the Lebanese on 6 July. The next day a military court tried him for treason and executed him on 8 July. Sa'ada's violent end made him a martyr in many quarters and actually boosted the SSNP's standing in both Syria and Lebanon.

Sa'ada's political thought centered on the idea of the Syrian nation, which in his view had roots in historical and geographical bonds among various ethnic and religious groups. His notion of Syria encompassed Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine, the Sinai Peninsula, and Cyprus.

According to Sa'ada, the historical mission of the Syrian nation necessitated its political unity under a secular regime.

SALADIN (SALAH AL-DIN AL-AYYUBI) (c. 1138-1193).

Renowned military hero of the Muslim effort against the Crusades and founder of the Ayyubid dynasty. Saladin began his rise to power in the service of Nur al-Din Mahmud, the atabeg who had established unified authority over Syria in 1154. As Nur al-Din's agent in Cairo, Saladin engineered the termination of the Fatimid caliphate and the restoration of nominal Abbasid authority over Egypt. In 1175, one year after Nur al-Din's death, he placed both Syria and Egypt under his own authority. Saladin is best known for his military efforts against the Crusaders, especially the 1187 Battle of Hattin, which led to the Muslim recapture of Jerusalem. By 1189, Saladin had uprooted most of the Latin strongholds along the Syrian coast as far north as Latakia. But three years later, a European counterattack known as the Third Crusade, forced him to retreat from key coastal towns. Nonetheless, at his death on 4 March 1193, Saladin was the first Muslim to rule over both Egypt and most of Syria in nearly two centuries.

SALAFIYYA.

A late nineteenth- and twentieth-century Islamic reform movement whose advocates believe that Muslims became vulnerable to European domination because they had strayed from the correct practice of their religion, so they called for a return to the religious beliefs and practices of the first generation of Muslims (*al-salaf al-salih*). The movement emerged in Damascus in the 1890s among a number of ulama conversant with reformist tendencies in other Muslim lands. Syrian salafis of the Ottoman period, like Tahir al-Jaza'iri and Jamal al-Din al-Qasimi, strove for reforms in Muslim education and law to combat the growing influence of secularism in the Ottoman Empire. They also encouraged an Arab cultural revival through their researches on Arab history. Moreover, in the Ottoman political context the salafis favored the restoration of constitutional government that had been suspended by Sultan Abdulhamid in 1878. Their views on

cultural and political matters attracted younger Syrians studying in secular schools and informed this rising generation's formulation of Arab nationalism. During the French Mandate era, salafis founded religious associations that provided the foundations for the Syrian branch of the Muslim Brothers.

SALJUK DYNASTY.

The Saljuks were a Turkish clan from Central Asia that in 1055 became the effective power behind the Abbasid caliphate. The Saljuk chiefs then took the title of sultan. They opened the way for the mass migration of Turkish nomads into the central lands of the Middle East and laid the foundations for nearly nine centuries of Turkish political and military preeminence in Syria. They first entered northern Syria in 1071, seized Damascus in 1078, occupied Aleppo in 1086, and drove the Fatimids out of the Syrian interior altogether. Unified Saljuk rule lasted but a few years, as after 1092 it quickly fragmented among regional domains divided between various princes, who in turn lost effective power to their tutors or atabegs by the early twelfth century.

SAN REMO AGREEMENT.

In the diplomatic aftermath of World War I the victorious allies, particularly Great Britain and France, had to reach a preliminary accord over the disposition of Ottoman territories and resources before a peace treaty could be signed to officially end the war. The agreement, signed at San Remo, Italy, on 24 April 1920, included a joint Anglo-French approach to Ottoman Arab lands they had occupied during the war. They agreed to grant France a mandate over Syria and Lebanon, while Great Britain received mandates over Palestine and Iraq. Two months later, France enforced its claim to Syria by invading the country and ousting the government of Amir Faysal.

SARRAJ, ABD AL-HAMID AL- (1925-).

Born in Hama, Sarraj was part of the growing leftist trend in the officer corps during the 1950s. He served in the national gendarmerie in the French Mandate era, then fought alongside other volunteers in the Palestine War of 1948. Thereafter he attracted the favorable

attention of Adib al-Shishakli. In 1954, after Shishakli's fall, he and other officers plotted against the pro-western cabinet of Sabri al-Asali, but the effort was detected in the planning stages, and Sarraj was sent to France as an assistant to the military attache.

He was rehabilitated the following year and in March 1955 promoted to head of military intelligence, in which capacity he presided over the investigation into the April 1955 assassination of Colonel Adnan al-Malki, a role that made Sarraj a well-known figure. This task involved the discovery of conspiracies supposedly hatched by Iraq, the Syrian Social National Party, and western governments to derail Syria's neutralist stance. Sarraj gained further stature when he uncovered the conspiracy of 1956 to overthrow the Syrian government. In March 1957, pro-western officers tried to transfer him to an innocuous post, but his solid backing among junior officers allowed him to resist the order. Two months later Sarraj formed a revolutionary command council of army officers and civilian politicians to keep Syria on its neutral foreign policy course. Along with Afif al-Bizri, Sarraj was now the dominant figure in the Syrian military, which since 1949 had dominated the country's politics. He favored the merger with Egypt to form the United Arab Republic, in which he rose to minister of interior, thus acquiring authority over Syria's security services. In this capacity, Sarraj became notorious for introducing police state measures to suppress dissent. In September 1960, Gamal Abd al-Nasir appointed him president of the Syrian Provincial Council, effectively the most powerful position for a Syrian in the UAR. In August the following year, however, Nasir removed him from that post to assume the more ceremonial office of vice president of the UAR. Sarraj resigned on 26 September 1961, two days before the coup that took Syria out of the UAR. The secessionist regime arrested him in early October, but in May 1962 he escaped from a military hospital and made his way to Egypt.

SAUDI ARABIA.

During the French Mandate, King Abd al-Aziz ibn Saud opposed Hashemite influence in Syria through his

political ally Shukri al-Quwwatli. Ibn Saud's primary concern was to block any move to transform Syria into a monarchy under Amir Abdullah, the ruler of Transjordan, or either of his brothers Faysal or Ali. The Saudi-Hashemite rivalry has its roots in their struggle for supremacy in Arabia during the 1920s when the Saudis attacked and defeated the Hashemite kingdom of the Hijaz in 1925. Saudi opposition to Hashemite interests continued during Syria's first years of independence when both Jordan and Iraq supported Syrian politicians inclined to form a union with either of those countries. In the inter-Arab struggle for paramount influence in Syria, Saudi Arabia usually cooperated with Egypt against Iraq and Jordan.

Syrian-Saudi relations became strained under the United Arab Republic and the first two Ba'th Party regimes, which championed the cause of revolution in the Arab world against all forces of "reaction," especially pro-western monarchies. Since 1970 Hafiz al-Asad has cultivated friendlier relations and in return has received large amounts of Saudi financial aid. But relations again became strained during the 1980s because of Syria's support for Iran in its war against Iraq. Ties improved in 1990 and 1991 when Asad gave strong support to Saudi Arabia in the wake of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

SAYYADI, ABU AL-HUDA AL- (1850-1909).

Religious shaykh who served as adviser to Sultan Abdulhamid and supported the sultan's claim to the caliphate. Sayyadi came from a family known as leaders of a small branch of the Rifa'iyya Sufi order near Aleppo. He traveled to Istanbul, where he earned a reputation for his singing of Sufi chants and gained entrance to Abdulhamid's entourage. The sultan then made him the head of all Rifa'iyya branches in the Arab lands. This order had numerous branches in Syria and Iraq and provided a network that allowed propaganda in favor of the sultan to reach dozens of towns and villages. Abu al-Huda fabricated genealogies to incorporate local Sufi orders into the Rifa'iyya order and to grant the status of ashraf to minor Sufi shaykhs. He also distributed posts, stipends, and medals to his clients.

As a result, many who worked in Syrian religious institutions depended on his patronage. Sayyadi also composed many books that supported Abdulhamid's claim to the caliphate and encouraged Muslims to support their ruler.

SECESSIONIST REGIME.

The term often used to refer to the government that emerged following Syria's September 1961 withdrawal from the United Arab Republic. The government restored parliamentary rule and in December held national elections that returned many of the conservative politicians who had dominated politics in the early years of independence. Khalid al-Azm won the largest share of votes for his stands in favor of democracy and against union with Egypt. On the other hand Salah al-Din al-Bitar and other candidates of the Ba'th Party that had brought about the union with Egypt were defeated. Yet Akram al-Hawrani, a Ba'thist leader who had criticized UAR policies, and his coalition partners did well. In the new government, People's Party leaders Ma'ruf al-Dawalibi became prime minister and Nazim al-Qudsi president. The conservative assembly rescinded the July 1961 Socialist Decrees that had nationalized large companies. It also sought to restore civilian authority.

Army officers, however, had grown accustomed to dictating to politicians, and between 28 March and 2 April 1962, three separate attempts at military coups were made. The first was by Abd al-Karim al-Nahlawi, who opposed any return to a more liberal regime. Three days later, a group of Nasirist and Ba'thist officers in Homs made a clumsy bid for power. Finally, Nasirist officers in Aleppo attempted a coup on 2 April. Aside from opposing the restoration of full civilian authority, the officers favored the continuation of land reform and the socialist decrees of the UAR. In the wake of these interventions, Dawalibi resigned, Qudsi declared the dissolution of the elected assembly, and Bashir al-Azma formed a more progressive cabinet that lasted until September. The Azma government partially restored socialist measures that Dawalibi had rescinded. In September, Qudsi consulted with the army command concerning a cabinet change because of Azma's weakness as prime minister. The army agreed to

the appointment of Khalid al-Azm and, to assure the progressive reforms, the retention of Azma as deputy prime minister. Azm continued with gradual implementation of land reform, but his desire to restore a fully democratic government alarmed the officers. His government lasted until the March 8, 1963 coup that ended the secessionist regime and brought the Ba'th Party to power.

SELIM I (r. 1512-1520).

Ottoman conqueror of Syria (1516) and Egypt (1517). His army of janissaries routed the Mamluks at Marj Dabiq, near Aleppo, on 24 August 1516. As Sultan Selim led his forces south, the Mamluks fled to Egypt, leaving Damascus to fall without a struggle one month later. On 23 January 1517, Ottoman forces easily defeated the Mamluks outside Cairo, thereby ending the Mamluk sultanate. Selim then organized Ottoman administration over Syria. He appointed an Ottoman governor over Aleppo and its districts, while he designated a Mamluk governor to preside over Damascus and extensive portions of central and southern Syria. In 1519, he created a new province centered on Tripoli, thereby reducing the scope of the province of Damascus.

SHAHBANDAR, ABD AL-RAHMAN (1880-1940).

A prominent Syrian nationalist during the French Mandate, he was a leading opponent of compromise with French authority. His devotion to Arab nationalism dated to the days of the Committee of Union and Progress and its "turkification" policies. He supported the Arab Revolt during World War I, and he briefly headed the foreign ministry under Amir Faysal. When France occupied Syria in July 1920, he fled the country. Shahbandar returned in 1921 and organized the Iron Hand Society to agitate against French rule. In April 1922, the French arrested Shahbandar and other Iron Hand leaders for inciting anti-French sentiment. The arrests triggered several days of demonstrations and bloody confrontation between protestors and French forces in Damascus. Nonetheless, the French tried Shahbandar for subversive activities and sentenced him to twenty years. After

he served a year and a half of his sentence, the French sent him into exile, where he joined the activities of the Syrian-Palestine Congress based in Cairo. The French allowed him to return to Syria in 1924. The following year, Shahbandar guided the formation of Syria's first nationalist party, the People's Party. He then helped organize the spread of the Great Revolt from Jabal Druze to the rest of Syria. He eluded the French authorities and moved to Jabal Druze for the duration of the revolt. There he and Sultan al-Atrash formed a provisional government; with the collapse of the revolt in 1927, Shahbandar fled to Transjordan and from there to Egypt.

In 1937, a French amnesty allowed him to return from exile, and he directed his supporters to oppose the Franco-Syrian Treaty on the grounds that it granted France privileges that detracted from Syrian sovereignty. He also directed a political campaign to discredit the National Bloc government and Prime Minister Jamil Mardam. During World War II, the French considered cooperating with Shahbandar because of his opposition to the National Bloc and because of support for him from Britain and the Hashemites. But in June 1940, he was assassinated. The French accused several prominent National Bloc figures, including Jamil Mardam and Sa'dallah al-Jabiri of plotting the murder, and they fled to Iraq. While Shahbandar was one of Syria's most popular leaders, he never built up an organization that would perpetuate his political legacy.

SHARI'A.

The Arabic term for Islamic law, shari'a has been an integral part of Syrian society for more than a thousand years. In Islamic legal theory, there are four sources for Islamic law: 1) the Qur'an, which is the word of God in Muslim belief; 2) the Sunna, or oral traditions of the Prophet Muhammad; 3) the consensus of scholarly opinion; and 4) analogical reasoning. Throughout the Islamic period, experts in Islamic law have been drawn from the ulama to serve as judges (sing. *qadi*) in religious courts and as jurisconsults (sing. *mufti*) to issue legal opinions. Muslim rulers from the early caliphate to the

Ottoman dynasty legitimized their rule by claiming to abide by and enforce the shari'a. The status of religious law began to weaken during the Tanzimat era of Ottoman history with the introduction of secular legal codes. The first reaction to the tide of secularism issued from the salafiyya movement, whose partisans argued for a reinterpretation of shari'a to demonstrate its relevance to the Ottoman project of modernization. Under the French Mandate, authorities initially refrained from tampering with the religious courts' remaining jurisdiction over personal status, but in 1928 a French proposal to call for religious equality in a draft constitution caused an uproar and the matter had to be abandoned.

On the whole, the shari'a emerged from the colonial period unscathed, but soon after independence Syria enacted a new civil code that represented a small step away from religious law. On the other hand, the 1953 Law of Personal Status reaffirmed the shari'a's authority over marriage, divorce, and other family matters among Muslims. The place of the shari'a in Syrian society came to the fore in the 1970s and early 1980s when the Muslim Brothers led popular demonstrations and a militant insurrection to overthrow the secular Ba'th Party regime in order to install an Islamic state that would reestablish the centrality of Islamic law. The Syrian government suppressed the uprising in 1982, and since that time the reduced role of the shari'a in public life has not been challenged.

SHARIF HUSAYN. See HUSAYN IBN ALI.

SHI'I.

The second largest Muslim sect after the Sunnis, the Shi'is are actually divided into several subsects, including the following communities found in Syria: the Twelvers or Imamis, Isma'ilis, Alawis, and Nizaris. The Druze religion is an offshoot of Isma'ili Shi'ism. The historical origins of Shi'ism go back to the first generation of Islam when differences arose concerning the rightful claimant to the caliphate. A party of Muslims supported the claims of the Prophet Muhammad's

cousin and son-in-law Ali ibn Abi Talib, but most Muslims backed other candidates as the first three caliphs. Ali's supporters became known as the "party of Ali," or *shi'at Ali* in Arabic, hence the term Shi'i. Ali gained the caliphate in 656, but his standing was challenged and ultimately he was assassinated in 661. Loyalty to Ali then devolved to his descendants, who were considered the imams, the legitimate religious and political leaders of the community. About a century after his death, schisms developed among the Shi'is when they disagreed on the identity of the imam. The various Shi'i sects that evolved during the eighth and ninth centuries arose on the basis of loyalty to different descendants of Ali. See FATIMID, QARMATI.

SHISHAKLI, ADIB AL- (1909-1964).

Colonel who launched the third military coup of 1949 to thwart any chance of union with Iraq. Born in Hama, he was a longtime associate of his fellow townsman Akram al-Hawrani. In the 1930s Shishakli was attracted to the Syrian Social National Party. He played a small part in Husni al-Za'im's coup of March 1949, but was then forced to retire. Sami al-Hinnawi reinstated him, and he then plotted with Hawrani to overthrow Hinnawi. When he deposed Hinnawi on 19 December 1949, he designated civilian politicians to govern Syria. The constituent assembly elected under Hinnawi continued to meet, Khalid al-Azm headed a civilian government, and Shishakli retained his post as deputy chief of staff, preferring to wield effective power from behind the scenes.

Shishakli moved to center stage on 28 November 1951 when he removed the People's Party from government and arrested its leaders. This event led to the resignation of President Hashim al-Atasi and Shishakli's promotion of his associate Colonel Fawzi Silu as head of state. He then took a series of steps to shore up his authority. First, he sought to organize popular support by establishing the Arab Liberation Movement in August 1952. The movement endorsed improving the standing of women, land reform, and more progressive labor laws. He built up the Syrian army, promoted younger officers with training in western countries,

and briefly unified its higher ranks under his control. He also asserted state authority over private and foreign schools. To dampen political opposition, Shishakli closed down political parties and banned members of the civil service and trade unions from political activity.

In July 1953, Shishakli conducted a referendum to approve a new constitution under which he was elected president and formed a cabinet of non-entities. That same month, his opponents gathered in Homs to plot a revolt that would begin in Jabal Druze and include demonstrations in major cities. Iraq also connived at Shishakli's downfall because of his suppression of the People's Party (the pro-Iraqi party) and his alignment with Saudi Arabia and Egypt. On 25 February 1954, military units in Aleppo, Dayr al-Zur, Hama, Homs, and Latakia mutinied and called for Shishakli to step down. He resigned and departed for Beirut, and left for Saudi Arabia two days later. In 1960 he moved to Brazil, where a Druze gunman assassinated him on 27 September 1964.

SIBA'I, MUSTAFA AL- (1915-1964).

Head of the Muslim Brothers in Syria from 1946 until 1957, professor of Islamic law, and dean of Damascus University's Law Faculty. His family was well-known in Homs for its association with religious learning. Siba'i went to Egypt in the early 1930s to study at its prestigious college of Islamic learning, the Azhar. While in Cairo, he joined the Muslim Brothers and participated in anti-British activities that led to his arrest and imprisonment. He returned to Homs in 1941 and established an activist religious group called Muhammad's Youth, modeled on the Muslim Brothers. He was instrumental in the 1946 foundation of the Syrian branch of the Muslim Brothers and became its leader. In addition to his political and religious activism, Siba'i wrote several influential works, among them *Islamic Socialism* in which he argued that Islam possesses a distinctive economic system that is akin to western types of socialism. According to Siba'i, Islamic socialism gives the state a guiding role through nationalization of public services.

Siba'i led the MuslimBrothers during the society's heyday of involvement in Syrian politics, between independence and Adib al-Shishakli's ban on the movement in 1952. He formed the Islamic Socialist Front in 1949 to contend elections to the constituent assembly and it gained four seats, including one for Siba'i. He led forces in the assembly that favored an article stipulating that Islam would be the state religion. Sharp debate in the assembly led to a compromise formula, which stated that the president must be a Muslim and that legislation should be derived from shari'a, or Islamic law. Siba'i remained an outspoken opponent of secular and leftist tendencies and a supporter of a neutralist foreign policy until poor health forced him to retire from politics in 1957.

SILU, FAWZI (1905-).

Prominent figure in Adib al-Shishakli's regime. Silu had a long career in the military, having joined the Troupes Spéciales in 1924. He was the first chief of the Homs military academy in independent Syria and led the Syrian delegation at the Armistice of 1949 talks. After Shishakli seized power in December 1949, he forced Silu on Prime Minister Nazim al-Qudsi as minister of defense to act as the army's man in the cabinet. When Shishakli established a military dictatorship in December 1951, he gave Silu full executive and legislative powers. Silu was no more than a figurehead as Shishakli set about dismantling the institutions of democratic government. Between June 1952 and July 1953, Silu headed a cabinet, but when Shishakli assumed the presidency he forced the colonel to retire. A few months later Colonel Silu left Syria and moved to Saudi Arabia.

SOCIALIST DECREES.

In July 1961, United Arab Republic President Gamal Abd al-Nasir announced a set of laws that nationalized banks, insurance companies, and three large industrial companies. Because of their unpopularity, the decrees are often cited as a factor in contributing to Syria's secession from the UAR two months later. During the tumultuous eighteen months following thesecession, conservative politicians tried to repeal or at least dilute these measures. As it turned out, they foreshadowed more

sweeping measures passed and implemented by the Ba'th Party regimes of the 1960s.

SOVIET UNION.

In the early 1950s many Syrians viewed good relations with the USSR as a means to maintain independence from British and American influence. The foundation stone for warm relations was laid on 23 March 1955, when Soviet Foreign Minister Molotov warned Turkey, which had massed troops along the border, against threatening Syria to force her into joining the Baghdad Pact. This was followed by a series of arms deals over the next three years. In February 1956, Syria negotiated the purchase of weapons from Czechoslovakia; in August, there followed a Soviet-Syrian cultural agreement. Syria then made trade pacts with other communist nations. This huge increase in Soviet influence benefited the Syrian Communist Party, which spread its ideas among a more sympathetic population. In August 1957, Soviet influence grew further with the signing of yet another economic agreement that included financing for development and the purchase of Syrian agricultural exports. Syria's drift toward the Soviets, however, was abruptly halted by the formation of the United Arab Republic in 1958 and the subsequent suppression of the SCP.

The conservative regimes that followed Syria's secession from the UAR did not pursue better relations with the Soviets, and the first chance for some improvement came after the March 8, 1963 coup. Initially, relations with the Ba'thist regime were cool, but they improved in 1964 with the ascendance of more radical members of the party. In April 1966, the Soviets offered to help Syria build a dam on the Euphrates River. In the wake of Syria's defeat in the June 1967 war, the Soviets resupplied the Syrian armed forces.

After Hafiz al-Asad came to power in 1970, the Soviets continued to provide military equipment and advisers, and again resupplied Syria after the October 1973 war. Syrian-Soviet relations received another boost in 1979 when Egypt signed a peace treaty with Israel under the auspices of the United States. The Soviets reinforced Syria's position against Israel by agreeing to a huge arms deal. Syria indicated its

support for the Soviets by refusing to criticize their invasion of Afghanistan at the end of 1979. The peak of Syrian-Soviet relations was reached when the two countries signed the October 1980 Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation. That was followed by another series of large arms transfers in 1982 and 1983, including the Soviet Union's most sophisticated missile defense system (manned by Soviet experts) and longrange surface-to-surface missiles.

At the end of the 1980s, however, Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev drew clear limits to his country's willingness to arm Syria when he advised President Asad to seek a negotiated solution to the conflict with Israel. When Gorbachev engineered the Soviet Union's withdrawal from Eastern Europe and rapprochement with the United States in 1989 and 1990, Syria became alarmed that it would lose the backing of its superpower patron. The end of the Cold War fundamentally altered the geopolitical context of the Arab-Israeli conflict, and President Asad adroitly adjusted to the new context by improving ties with the United States while maintaining good relations with the new Russian state that emerged from the defunct Soviet Union in 1992.

SUFISM.

This mystical aspect of Muslim religious practice and belief developed in early Islamic times from a movement for greater asceticism and piety. Sufism has been a widespread phenomenon in all Muslim lands, including Syria. Followers of the mystical way are known as Sufis. Sufism concentrates on the individual believer's relationship with *Allah*, the Arabic word for God. Its central concept is that through moral purification and rigorous devotional practice the believer draws closer to Allah and might eventually attain a mystical union with Him. The characteristic practice of Sufism is *dhikr*, the ceremonial remembrance of Allah by an individual or by a group of mystics. In the eleventh century, mystical brotherhoods or Sufi orders (sing. *tariqa*) formed on the basis of a particular Sufi's practices and teachings. Groups of Sufis gathered at convents called *zawiyas*, which became widespread in Syrian towns during the eleventh and twelfth centuries under the patronage of the atabegs and the Ayyubid dynasty.

The Mamluk sultans added more endowments for these Sufi convents. The best-known early Sufi orders in Syria were the Rifa'iyya and Qadiriyya orders, which remained popular well into the twentieth century. The Suhrawardiyya and Shadhiliyya orders also had wide followings in medieval times.

The Ottoman era saw the spread of two more Sufi orders: the Khalwatiyya and Naqshbandiyya. In the nineteenth century, the latter order became the vanguard of a movement to make Sufi practices more rigorously conform to the prescriptions of Islamic law or shari'a. This shari'a-minded Sufism took root most firmly in Damascus, particularly following the arrival of the renowned peripatetic Shaykh Khalid al-Naqshbandi (1780-1827). He founded a branch of the order known as the Mujaddidiyya-Naqshbandiyya, which also gained adherents among high Ottoman officials in Istanbul. Later in the nineteenth century, this reformist Sufism attracted more ulama and influenced the early stages of the salafiyya reform movement. At the same time, Sultan Abdulhamid and his Syrian adviser Abu al-Huda al-Sayyadi supported Sufi orders that followed traditional ways, such as the Rifa'iyya.

In the twentieth century, Islamic reform groups like the Muslim Brothers and secular social movements attracted much of the urban population that historically associated with Sufi orders. Nonetheless, the orders continue to provide religious guidance and a milieu for spiritual discipline. The Naqshbandiyya and Rifa'iyya have the largest followings, but in general the appeal of Sufism today is limited.

SULEYMAN I (r. 1520-1566).

Known as Suleyman the Magnificent, this great Ottoman sultan ruled from 1520 to 1566. He immediately faced a revolt by the Mamluk governor of Damascus, Janbardi al-Ghazali, who took over Homs, Hama, and Tripoli, but failed in his attempt to seize Aleppo. An Ottoman counterattack soon reconquered Tripoli and Damascus. Sultan Suleyman then appointed a Turkish governor for Damascus and separate governors for portions of

southern Syria. Ottoman rule over Syria, then, was decisively consolidated during Suleyman's long reign.

SUNNI.

The majority Muslim sect, which comprises about 70 percent of the population. In early Islamic history, the Sunnis were those Muslims who accepted the legitimacy of the early caliphs, supported Mu'awiya in his struggle against Ali, and backed the Umayyad and Abbasid dynasties against various Shi'i movements. Sunni political power in Syria faced its most serious challenge during the tenth and eleventh centuries when the Fatimid dynasty of Egypt, the Hamdanid dynasty of Aleppo, and the Qarmati movement dominated most of the country. Sunni authority was restored in the late eleventh century by the Saljuk dynasty, but Nizari strongholds survived in remote parts of Syria and challenged the Saljuks and their Ayyubid successors well into the thirteenth century. During the Mamluk sultanate, the last vestiges of Shi'i power were stamped out. Both the Mamluks and the Ottoman dynasty legitimized their rule by claiming to uphold Sunni Islam.

Sunni preeminence in Syria was firmly established by dynastic tradition, but also by the economic domination of Sunni townsmen over the rural hinterland. In the late nineteenth century, urban Sunnis came into possession of vast rural estates with hundreds of villages. The political elite of the late Ottoman, French Mandate, and early independence eras largely consisted of Sunni absentee landowners. The entry of the armed forces into politics through a series of military coups and then the United Arab Republic's land reform measures weakened the standing of the Sunni political elite. The final blow to the tradition of Sunni power was struck by the Ba'th Party regimes with their concentration of religious minorities intent on breaking the power of landlords and promoting a secular identity for Syria. Sunni reaction to the new order took the form of protests and demonstrations in the 1960s, and then an armed insurrection in the 1970s and 1980s that was fiercely repressed by the regime of Hafiz al-Asad, himself an Alawi.

SYKES-PICOT AGREEMENT.

Diplomatic accord of 16 May 1916 between Great Britain and France by which they agreed to the disposition of the Ottoman Empire's territories in the event of its defeat in World War I. In November 1915 formal negotiations between the two allies had commenced with a view to agreeing on spheres of influence. According to the agreement, which was kept secret for fear of antagonizing Britain's Arab allies, France was to exercise direct control over the Syrian coast and to have a sphere of influence over the Syrian interior, while Britain obtained control over southern Iraq and a sphere of influence in southern Syria. In November 1917, the Soviet Union disclosed the terms of the Sykes-Picot agreement, and the British sought to minimize its damaging effects by promising its Arab allies that its terms neither contradicted the Husayn-McMahon Correspondence nor stipulated the imposition of French rule over Syria. The postwar settlement, however, followed Sykes-Picot more closely than British promises of Arab independence.

SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC.

The official name of Syria adopted in 1961 after the dissolution of the United Arab Republic in September.

SYRIAN CATHOLIC.

Former Syrian Orthodox Christians who entered communion with Rome beginning in 1783. Their historic homeland was in southern Turkey and northern Iraq, but in the early 1920s many Syrian Catholics emigrated to Syria. Their patriarchate is near Beirut. About 30,000 Syrian Catholics live in Aleppo, Damascus, and Jazira.

SYRIAN COMMUNIST PARTY.

Established in Syria in 1928 as an extension of the communist Lebanese People's Party that had been founded two years earlier. The SCP grew under the leadership of Khalid Bakdash, who became party secretary in 1936. In the next three years its membership increased to 2,000, mostly among students and intellectuals. Then in September 1939, the French banned the party and arrested its leaders. The party was again allowed to openly function in January 1941 until 1948. At the party's national congress of

December 1943 to January 1944, it adopted a platform that stressed national and democratic principles rather than class struggle and revolution. This position reflected Bakdash's understanding that the party lacked a large proletarian constituency and that it made sense for the party to espouse generally progressive ideas.

Bakdash's careful formulation of party principles to match the popular mood was sabotaged by the Soviet Union's support for the 1947 United Nations resolution to partition Palestine. Moscow's position so outraged Syrian opinion that a crowd destroyed the SCP's headquarters in Damascus and killed several members. Moreover, the Soviet position angered many members, and large numbers quit the party. At the same time, the Syrian government banned the SCP. Its fortunes revived, however, in the mid-1950s because of growing anti-western sentiment.

In the campaign for national elections in 1954, party chief Khalid Bakdash ran as an independent because the government refused to lift the ban on the party. He called for a progressive national front against imperialism and for democracy at home. His election in September made him the first communist to gain a seat in an Arab parliament. The SCP then joined forces with the Ba'th Party to oppose Syria's joining the Baghdad Pact in 1955. An arms deal with Czechoslovakia in February 1956 further bolstered the party's standing. Other developments that helped the SCP included the 1956 Suez war in which France, Great Britain, and Israel attacked Egypt and the Soviets vigorously supported Egypt, and the crisis in relations with the United States in the fall of 1957. Also in 1956 and 1957, the party worked closely with the popular independent politician Khalid al-Azm, a powerful member of the cabinet. The phenomenal increase in the SCP's standing by the end of 1957 was a factor in the decision taken by the Ba'th Party leadership and army officers to pursue union with Egypt and the creation of the United Arab Republic in February 1958. The union weakened the SCP in three ways. First, many members favored the union and left the party when Bakdash refused to endorse it; second, Bakdash himself went into exile; and third, all political parties

were dissolved and the SCP in particular suffered harsh persecution under Gamal Abd al-Nasir's anti-communist regime. The SCP has never recovered the influence it enjoyed in the mid-1950s, but in 1972 Hafiz al-Asad included it in the National Progressive Front led by the Ba'th Party. In the last twenty years, the SCP has been torn by internal tensions as a number of leaders grew impatient with Bakdash's long tenure as secretary-general. By the mid-1980s, four communist splinter groups formed, but only Bakdash's faction is tolerated by the regime.

SYRIAN CONGRESS.

During Amir Faysal's brief rule from October 1918 to July 1920, the Syrian Congress was the closest institution to a nationally elected assembly. In June 1919 members of the Congress were elected under Ottoman procedures in the main cities, while local notables chose delegates in other parts of the country. Faysal hoped that it would give his regime greater international legitimacy and strengthen his diplomatic position against France's claim to Syria. In particular, Faysal wanted a representative body to testify to Syrian aspirations before the King-Crane Commission, which President Woodrow Wilson sent in order to determine what kind of political arrangements the Syrians desired. A second task of the Congress was to draft a constitution. A committee was formed and drew up a document for discussion, but consideration of the draft was interrupted by the French invasion in July 1920.

A minority of radical nationalist members dominated the Congress, and they hampered Faysal's attempts to satisfy France's desire to build up its influence over Syria. To underscore its refusal to countenance any role for the French, in March 1920 the Congress declared Faysal the king of a completely independent Syria. By that time, however, Faysal was more interested in fending off France's aggressive designs than nationalist posing, yet he needed the Congress to validate his standing in Syria. During the final crisis between Faysal and France, the Congress voted to resist an invasion. The easy victory of French forces at the Battle of Maysalun in July 1920 spelled the end of the Syrian Congress.

SYRIAN FLAG.

Changes in the official flag reflect Syria's volatile political history. In Hashemite Syria, the flag consisted of horizontal bars of green, white, and black to stand for the Fatimid, Umayyad, and Abbasid dynasties. In 1932, a new flag added three red stars to the white bar. The stars represented the united provinces of Aleppo, Damascus, and Dayr al-Zur. Syria kept that flag until it entered the United Arab Republic with Egypt in 1958. The UAR flag had red, white, and black bars with two green stars representing Syria and Egypt. The 1932 flag was restored after Syria withdrew from the UAR in 1961. When the Ba'th Party came to power in 1963, it adopted the UAR flag with three stars, the additional one to stand for Iraq because of hopes for a union of the three states. The current flag has just two stars.

SYRIAN-ISRAELI PEACE TALKS.

After the Madrid Conference of October-November 1991, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, a Palestinian delegation, and Syria agreed to hold bilateral talks in Washington, D.C. Between December 1991 and June 1993, Syria and Israel conducted nine rounds of talks. In the first four rounds until May 1992, the Syrians negotiated with an Israeli delegation appointed by the right wing Likud government, and the talks made no headway in resolving their dispute. Then in June 1992, Israel's Labor Party headed by Yitzhak Rabin defeated Likud in national elections. When bilateral talks resumed in August, a more civil tone was adopted by both parties, and Syria formally offered a peace treaty in exchange for the Golan Heights, which Israel has occupied since the June 1967 war. At that time, Syria also insisted that its peace agreement with Israel be contingent on a comprehensive peace including Jordan, Lebanon, and the Palestinians. Israel rejected that position and insisted that Syria provide specific details on what it meant by normalizing relations that would accompany peace. At the seventh round in October, Israel stated that it would undertake a withdrawal in the Golan Heights but refused to commit itself to a full withdrawal. By the end of the tenth round in June 1993, the parties had not come any closer to agreement.

In August 1993, Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization announced their agreement to grant mutual recognition and a plan for resolving the Palestinian dimension of the Arab-Israeli conflict under the terms of the Oslo Accords. Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad responded to this stunning development by saying that Syria would neither oppose the accord nor its critics, mainly radical Palestinian factions based in Syria and Lebanon. To indicate his anger at the deal for sabotaging his strategy of negotiating on the basis of a common Arab position, Asad withheld Syrian participation in the eleventh round of bilateral talks in September.

While Syrian-Israeli bilateral talks remained suspended, American Secretary of State Warren Christopher undertook shuttle diplomacy throughout 1994 seeking to narrow the differences between Syrian and Israeli positions. While his efforts bore no fruit on the Syrian-Israeli track, he did persuade Jordan to resume bilateral talks in June. This was quickly followed by an agreement to end the state of war between Jordan and Israel in July and a formal peace treaty in October. Once again Asad's desire to maintain a common Arab position was thwarted. Meanwhile, a number of meetings between the Syrian and Israeli ambassadors to the United States took place in the second half of 1994. Christopher continued his shuttle diplomacy in 1995 and inched toward bridging the differences in the parties' positions.

As of July 1995, Syria had indicated that it would share the Golan's water resources if Israel would fully withdraw. The Syrians also accepted Israel's position that demilitarized and limited forces zones would be deeper on its side of the border than on Israel's. The extent of Israel's withdrawal remained the major point of contention because Prime Minister Rabin would not publicly pledge a full withdrawal, perhaps because of the shaky domestic political support for it. Furthermore, Rabin wanted a phased withdrawal over three to five years while Asad insisted it take no longer than one year.

SYRIAN ORTHODOX.

Also known as Jacobite Christians. Their origins stem from fifth-century dogmatic disputes over the nature of Christ. One group, the Monophysites, advanced the idea that Christ was purely divine. They became the Copts, the dominant sect in Egypt, and in the sixth century gained a Syrian following largely through the work of Bishop Jacobus Baradaeus. Their Greek Orthodox opponents called them followers of Jacobus, or Jacobites. This was the most widely followed Christian sect at the time of the seventh-century Muslim conquest. Like the Nestorians, the Jacobites translated Greek scientific and philosophical works into Syriac, from which Arabic translations were made during the early Islamic centuries. In the twentieth century their patriarchate was first located in Homs but then moved in 1957 to Damascus. Most Syrian Orthodox Christians live in Damascus, Aleppo, the vicinity of Homs, and in Jazira, especially the towns of Qamishli and Hasaka.

SYRIAN-PALESTINE CONGRESS.

Political organization based in Cairo and set up by Syrian exiles at a congress held in Geneva in June 1921. The Syrian-Palestine Congress strove for the unity of geographical Syria and the end of French and British rule. Its main activities were fund-raising and publishing propaganda on behalf of the Syrian nationalist movement, to which it devoted more attention than the Palestine cause. The Congress was hampered by personal and political divisions among its leadership. One faction was more secular and looked to the Hashemites and Great Britain for support in the struggle against the French Mandate. This faction included Abd al-Rahman Shahbandar, whose Iron Hand Society and People's Party depended on funds the Congress raised abroad. The other faction, which laid greater emphasis on Islam, looked more to Turkey and Saudi Arabia for support. Shakib Arslan and Rashid Rida headed this group. A third faction emerged from members of the Istiqlal Party, which was secular, pan-Arab, and anti-British. Its leading figure was Adil Arslan.

During the Great Revolt, tensions between the factions mounted as the French negotiated with Shakib Arslan, thereby

arousing Shahbandar's jealousy. Furthermore, Istiqlal member Shukri al-Quwwatli managed to convince the Saudi ruler Ibn Saud to contribute funds for the revolt. To handle the money, a Jerusalem Committee under Istiqlalist control was established, and when the French gained the upper hand against the revolt in the second half of 1926, the Shahbandar faction accused the Jerusalem Committee of embezzling funds. Mutual recriminations mounted and by the end of 1927 the Congress formally split into two separate organizations. The personal rivalries that developed in the Syrian-Palestine Congress persisted into the late 1930s in the form of mistrust between Quwwatli, by then a leader in the National Bloc, and Shahbandar, who was trying to edge his way back onto the political scene after a decade in exile.

SYRIAN SOCIAL NATIONAL PARTY.

Established in Lebanon in 1932 by Antun al-Sa'ada, this party is devoted to unifying historical Syria, which it defines as the modern states of Cyprus, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria. As an organization, the party emphasizes loyalty to the leader and militaristic discipline. Other key tenets include a firm commitment to secularism and opposition to sectarianism and localism. The party developed a substantial following in Lebanon but held little attraction in Syria until the execution of Sa'ada in 1949 after an alleged plot to overthrow the Lebanese government.

The party then moved its headquarters to Damascus under its new leader George Abd al-Masih. Sa'ada's martyrdom elicited a wave of sympathy for the party, and in November 1949 it won nine seats in elections to Syria's constituent assembly, gaining most of its votes from non-Sunnis and non-Arabs drawn to its secularism. The party's fortunes seemed to improve when Adib al-Shishakli came to power in a military coup in December 1949. The new strongman had briefly belonged to the SSNP during the French Mandate, and for a short time after his coup he cultivated the party's backing. But in the campaign for the October 1953 elections to parliament, Shishakli spread insinuations in the press that the SSNP's candidates received

funds from the United States. The party gained just one seat in the election and it moved into opposition along with the Ba'th Party, the Syrian Communist Party, and the Muslim Brothers.

After Shishakli's fall in February 1954, new parliamentary elections were held in September. Apparently, public sympathy for the SSNP had been exhausted and its fortunes were damaged by swelling sentiment against prowestern candidates. The party ran fifteen candidates and won just two seats. Any potential it might still have had was crushed when a party member assassinated Adnan al-Malki in April 1955, after which its supporters in the army and government offices were purged. The party's higher council expelled George Abd al-Masih for his alleged role in plotting Malki's assassination and precipitating the Syrian government's crackdown on the party. Since that time, the SSNP has remained a force in Lebanese politics, but not in Syria.

T

TABQA DAM.

Located on the Euphrates River 200 km east of Aleppo, construction began in 1968 and was completed in 1973 with technical and financial assistance from the Soviet Union. The Tabqa Dam is 5 km long and 70 meters high. Its eight turbines have increased Syria's capacity to produce electricity and allowed an expansion of irrigated agriculture. An 80-km-long lake behind the dam, called Lake Asad, supplies Aleppo's water through an underground aqueduct.

Syrian planners originally expected the dam to allow the extension of irrigated agriculture to 640,000 hectares, but this figure has been revised downward several times to 240,000 hectares. By the late 1980s, less than 30,000 hectares had been put under cultivation on state-run farms. The main problem in installing irrigation systems has been the nature of the Euphrates Basin's soil, which is crusty and easily eroded.

TA'IF ACCORD.

October 1989 agreement to restructure Lebanon's political system in a manner that formally ended Christian

dominance. The background to the accord lay in the stalemated presidential election of 1988, when it proved impossible to elect a successor to Amin Gemayel. President Gemayel designated General Michel Aoun interim prime minister, but the outgoing Sunni prime minister Salim al-Hoss refused to recognize Aoun, and for the next two years Lebanon had two contenders for leadership: Michel Aoun and the Hoss cabinet. Heavy fighting broke out in 1988 and the first half of 1989 as General Aoun sought to force the Syrians out of the country. An initiative by the League of Arab States to resolve the crisis led to a meeting of the Lebanese parliament at the Saudi Arabian resort town of Ta'if in October 1989. The Ta'if Accord provided for fundamental reform of Lebanon's political system by redistributing power among the president, prime minister, and speaker of the chamber; and by equalizing the Muslim and Christian ratios in parliament. It also called for the restoration of government authority over all of Lebanon, the evacuation of Israel's troops from the south, and the establishment of special ties with Syria.

The accord could not be immediately implemented because of Michel Aoun's opposition on the ground that the withdrawal of foreign forces, Syrian and Israeli, should come first. But the powerful Christian Lebanese Forces decided to support the immediate application of Ta'if, and terrible fighting broke out between Aoun's mostly Christian army and the Lebanese Forces in early 1990. The situation appeared stalemated as Aoun stood his ground and enjoyed open diplomatic and military backing from Iraq. The deadlock was broken, however, in the wake of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990. Syria supported the United States' moves against Iraq in the wake of the latter's annexation of Kuwait, and in return the Americans agreed to a decisive Syrian military move against Aoun, who was forced into exile in France. Since then, Syria has consolidated its position as the dominant power in Lebanon and supported the reconstitution of the Lebanese state on the foundation of the Ta'if Accord.

TANZIMAT.

This is the term for the reorganization of the Ottoman Empire's bureaucratic and military institutions that commenced in 1839 and is usually said to have lasted until 1876. In fact, the process of institutional modernization continued until the end of Ottoman rule in Syria in 1918. The purpose of the Tanzimat was to reestablish imperial control over the provinces, including Syria, and to strengthen the empire against European encroachments. To achieve these goals, Ottoman reformers experimented with new administrative regulations, reformed military practices, overhauled the judicial system, promulgated law codes, invested in transportation and communications, and established schools based on European models to train soldiers and officials. The Tanzimat signaled a fundamental change in the purposes of Ottoman rule, which had customarily been limited to providing security and extracting revenues. The authorities now intended to involve the state in education, commerce, public works, agriculture, and redefining relations among the empire's diverse population.

Such an extensive program of change was bound to meet opposition, particularly from provincial groups whose political and economic fortunes might be diminished by a stronger central authority. Another cause of opposition to the Tanzimat lay in its secular thrust, embodied in the 1856 Imperial Rescript guaranteeing equal status between Muslims and non-Muslims. Christians' growing prosperity, due in large part to their ties to European traders and consuls, contributed to Muslim resentment and anger in the 1840s and 1850s. This anti-Christian sentiment exploded in two violent urban outbursts, the Aleppo massacre of 1850 and the July 1860 Damascus massacre. In both instances the Ottomans firmly suppressed communal violence, displaced the local urban leadership, and elevated a fresh group of individuals to the ranks of provincial leadership. The new urban elite proved more amenable to implementing Tanzimat measures.

The Ottomans applied Tanzimat measures in piecemeal fashion throughout the empire, and they did not take root in Syria until after 1860, when the Ottomans buttressed their authority by increasing the number of imperial troops and

undermining the influence of local paramilitary contingents commanded by aghas. Over the previous two decades they had experimented with new forms of provincial and urban administration, chiefly councils composed of dignitaries drawn from the religious, civil, and non-Muslim elites. During the 1860s, the scope of the Tanzimat's application in Syria broadened: Telegraph lines went up between Syria and Istanbul; provincial gendarmeries supplanted the traditional irregular forces; new criminal, civil, and commercial codes were enacted; land registration and direct taxation were implemented; and the first state schools opened. The Ottomans improved internal security by stationing larger, better equipped military forces in new barracks and constructing garrisons on the fringes of the desert to control the bedouin. By the early 1870s, a fresh set of local dignitaries that demonstrated loyalty to the new Ottoman order was established as a new political and economic elite. This provincial nobility and their descendants provided Syria's political leadership and dominated the country's economy for the rest of the Ottoman era, throughout the French Mandate era, and in the early years of independence until it was displaced in the 1960s by the regimes of the Ba'th Party.

TIMUR LENG (1336-1405).

Known in the west as Tamerlane, his name means Timur "the Lame," because of a limp that resulted from a wound he suffered in his early days. This Central Asian conqueror rose in the service of the Chaghatay Mongol ruler of western Central Asia, then rebelled and seized power at Samarkand in 1369. From that point until his death thirty-five years later, Timur was almost constantly leading devastating military campaigns that struck terror into their victims. Apart from the usual excesses of massacre, rape, and plunder, Timur devised the grotesque practice of constructing towers of human skulls to mark his triumphs.

For thirty years he ravaged Iran, Iraq, southern Russia, eastern Asia Minor, and northern India. He briefly threatened Syria in 1387 while his soldiers marauded in Asia Minor. Timur sent an envoy to Cairo to the Mamluk Sultan Barquq, who had the envoy murdered and then sought a military

alliance with the rising Ottoman dynasty of western Asia Minor. Timur pursued other lines of conquest but returned to Syria in 1399, by which time Barquq had died. When the Ottomans proposed an alliance to his successor, the sultan rejected the idea, so the Mamluks faced the onslaught of Timurid forces alone. In the fall of 1400, Timur led an invasion of Syria and drove the Mamluks out of Aleppo and Damascus. His troops pillaged both cities and Timur ordered the deportation of thousands of skilled craftsmen and laborers to his capital at Samarkand. He left Damascus in March 1401 and headed east to sack Baghdad and then inflicted a devastating defeat on the Ottomans. His departure from Syria, though, gave the Mamluks the opportunity to restore their authority over Syria. Timur's insatiable appetite for conquest then led him to contemplate an invasion of China, but he died as he was planning the campaign. The enormous empire he had conquered over nearly four decades stretched across much of Asia, but it lacked institutional underpinnings and fragmented within two years of his demise.

TLAS, MUSTAFA (1932-).

Minister of defense since 1972. Tlas is a Sunni Muslim from a town near Homs. He joined the Ba'th Party when he was a schoolboy and attended the Military Academy at Homs, where he became acquainted with another young Ba'thist, Hafiz al-Asad. After graduation, Tlas became an officer in a tank unit. He was brought onto the Military Committee after the March 8, 1963 coup, and in August 1965 Tlas was named to the party's Regional Command. He participated in the February 23, 1966 coup by the neo-Ba'th against the party's original leadership. When a power struggle developed within the neo-Ba'th between Salah al-Jadid and Hafiz al-Asad, Tlas sided with the latter. Asad bolstered his own base of power in the armed forces in February 1968 when he dismissed Ahmad alSuwaydani as chief of staff and handed the post to Tlas and made him deputy minister of defense. Tlas ensured the loyalty of the armed forces to Asad, giving the latter the necessary backing for his seizure of power in the November

1970 corrective movement. In 1972, Asad made Tlas minister of defense, and he has held that position ever since.

TRANSJORDAN.

After World War I, Great Britain assumed a League of Nations mandate over Palestine, which consisted of southern Syrian lands on both sides of the Jordan River. When the French evicted Amir Faysal from Syria, the British decided to install his brother Abdallah as amir of Transjordan, thus founding the one enduring political legacy to Britain's wartime alliance with the Hashemite clan. Abdallah schemed to expand his realm by taking over Syria (see GREATER SYRIA). To that end he developed good relations with a number of prominent Syrian personalities. Ultimately, Abdallah's territorial ambitions took him westward. In the Palestine War of 1948 his forces conquered those parts of Palestine that the United Nations had set aside for an Arab state. Since Abdallah's domain was no longer "across the Jordan," he renamed it Jordan.

TRANSPORTATION.

Modern means of transport came to Syria during the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid, who granted concessions to European companies to construct railways. In 1891, a French company completed a line between Beirut, Damascus, and the Hawran. Two years later a railway linking Damascus and Aleppo was finished. In 1911, a foreign company completed work on a railway line between Tripoli and Homs. The most important line for Abdulhamid was one to connect Damascus and Mecca in order to ease the difficult journey of the pilgrim caravan from Syria. When it opened in 1908, the Hijaz railway reduced the journey from forty days to just five. (See ABID, AHMAD IZZAT).

During the French Mandate, there was little further development of rail, but paved roads for motor vehicles increased from 700 to 2,900 km by 1939, and a regular motor service between Damascus and Baghdad was begun. The first two decades of independence saw the gradual extension of paved roads to more remote parts of the country. More recently, between 1968 and 1990 paved roads grew from 8,100 to nearly 23,000 km. Over the same period, railway

track grew from 850 to more than 2,000 km. The new lines connect Qamishli to Dayr al-Zur, Aleppo, and Latakia to allow easier transport of crops from Jazira to major cities and the coast. A second main line was built to link Tartus to the existing line from Homs to Aleppo.

Syria's ports have also grown since independence. Construction on Latakia's port began in 1952; a new port opened at Tartus in 1970, and in the 1980s it surpassed Latakia as Syria's main port. Baniyas is a third port that primarily services oil exports.

TROUPES SPÉCIALES DU LEVANT.

During the French Mandate, French authorities set up an armed force of Syrians, initially called the Legion Syrienne, then the Troupes Auxiliares, and finally in 1930 the Troupes Spéciales du Levant. The force's numbers grew from 6,500 in 1924 to 14,000 in 1936. To train officers for the Troupes Spéciales, the French established a Military Academy in Damascus in 1920, which was moved to Homs in 1932.

Controversy has swirled over the mandatory authorities' recruitment practices, with Syrian nationalists charging France with enlisting disproportionate numbers of non-Arab and non-Muslim minorities such as Armenians, Kurds, and Circassians, while others argue that recruiting patterns fluctuated and did not reflect a cynical policy of exploiting and deepening Syria's communal divisions. The issue assumes historiographical and political significance because army officers of minority background have dominated the country's politics since 1963, and some observers explain their ascent by referring to the practices of the country's former colonial power.

TURKEY.

Relations with the successor state of the Ottoman Empire have fluctuated between hostile and cordial. When Syria became independent, just seven years had elapsed since Turkey's annexation of Alexandretta. Turkey's recognition of Israel further rankled Syrians. Finally, in the 1950s, Turkey joined NATO and openly aligned itself with western interests in the region. Syria, on the other hand, pursued a neutralist line before seeking economic and military support

from the Soviet Union. In March 1955 Turkey massed its troops along the border to dissuade the Syrians from signing a defense pact with Egypt and Saudi Arabia. In the spring and summer of 1957, Turkey again sent troops to the border to signal its disapproval of Syria's economic and weapons deals with the Soviets. Relations did not begin to improve until the 1960s when Turkey sought regional support for its position on Cyprus. In both the June 1967 war and the October 1973 war Turkey provided diplomatic and humanitarian support for the Arab side. Moreover, the regime of Hafiz al-Asad pursued a more active policy of cultivating better relations, for instance initiating the frequent exchange of ministerial level missions.

There are three outstanding bilateral issues that trouble Syrian-Turkish relations. First, there is the 500 km border drawn at the end of World War I. The border left Turks, Syrians, and their respective properties on the wrong side of the new international frontier. This situation most acutely affected families with agricultural properties. The governments have generally adopted pragmatic policies allowing the other country's nationals to continue cultivating their property. On the other hand, Syrian land reforms and nationalizations disenfranchised Turks with property in Syria. The Turkish government retaliated with seizures of Syrians' property in Turkey. The second major issue is the sharing of river waters, primarily the Euphrates River, but also the Orontes River. Since the late 1960s, Turkey has been developing a network of dams and hydraulic projects to vastly increase its hydroelectric output and irrigated lands. At the same time, Syria depends on certain levels of the Euphrates for irrigation and electrical generation at the Tabqa Dam. The third issue arises from Turkey's allegations that Syria has supported the activities of Armenian terrorists and Kurdish guerrillas.

TURKOMEN.

Non-Arab, Sunni Muslim Turks who live in Jazira province, along the lower Euphrates River, near Aleppo, and in villages thinly scattered in central Syria. They are descendants of Turkomen nomadic tribes that entered Syria at

various times between the eleventh and seventeenth centuries, often encouraged by dynasties that sought to put the Turkomen's military prowess at their service.

U

ULAMA.

The general term for Muslim scholars of Islamic sciences, they have held a special status since early Islamic times. In the first Islamic centuries, one acquired religious knowledge by studying under established scholars known for their expertise in particular fields of knowledge. Beginning in the eleventh century, religious learning became institutionalized in madrasas. In addition to their educational function, ulama staffed the religious law or shari'a courts, served as jurisconsults (*muftis*) interpreting the law, and performed a variety of functions at mosques. The ulama also dominated the administration of endowed properties (sing. *waqf*), for which service they received income. Most ulama pursued private interests in trade and manufacture as well.

Ulama comprised a large part of the urban elite until the late nineteenth century when the Ottoman-era Tanzimat reforms promoted secular educational and legal institutions. From that time onward, their significance and status in society began to decline. While most ulama adhered to their traditional ways, a small number advanced an Islamic reform movement called the salafiyya in a bid to reestablish their centrality and to stave off the tide of secularism. In the twentieth century, however, the ulama's prospects and numbers have continued to diminish. The ulama are still central in Islamic religious institutions and education, and some of them have played an important role in modern Islamic movements such as the Muslim Brothers.

UMAYYAD DYNASTY.

Ruled the Arab Empire from 661 to 750. Its roots are in the clan of Umayya, one of the preeminent clans of Mecca during the life of Muhammad; most clan members bitterly opposed Muhammad, although a few were early converts. The third rightly-guided caliph, Uthman (r. 644-656), belonged to this clan and appointed several of his

clansmen to powerful positions in the emergent Arab imperial administration. Uthman was murdered by Muslim opponents, who then proclaimed his rival Ali the new caliph. But Uthman's Umayyad clansmen demanded revenge for his murder and refused to recognize Ali as caliph until they were satisfied. There ensued a Muslim civil war between forces loyal to Ali and the Umayyads, headed by the governor of Syria, Mu'awiya. The military confrontation fizzled into arbitration, and before a resolution of the matter, Ali was assassinated by a disgruntled former partisan, thus opening the way for Mu'awiya's unchallenged ascent to the caliphate.

Under the Umayyads Arab military expeditions reached India and China in the east and Spain in the west, the Arab Empire at its greatest extent. They consolidated Arab rule over much of Central Asia, leading to the eventual conversion of that region's peoples to Islam. In the later 740s, Umayyad rule weakened because of rivalry between factions within the ruling family and increasing discontent among the empire's growing number of non-Arab converts to Islam who continued to receive the treatment of conquered subjects. In 749, a revolutionary movement led by the Abbasid clan took advantage of the Umayyads' vulnerability and swept them out of power. The last Umayyad caliph was hunted down and killed in Egypt in 750.

UMAYYAD MOSQUE.

The major Islamic monument in Damascus. Originally an Aramean temple to Baal-Hadad, then successively a Roman temple to Jupiter, and a Christian church dedicated to John the Baptist. For seventy years after the Arab conquest of Damascus, the new Muslim rulers left the church alone. The Umayyad caliph al-Walid (r. 705-715) turned the church into a mosque and built a splendid new structure that blends the older Christian with the newer Islamic elements. The mosque has been burned three times, in 1069 during fighting between townsfolk and the Fatimid garrison, in 1400 when Timur Leng sacked the city, and by accident in 1893.

UNIATE.

Any eastern church that has entered into union with the Roman Catholic Church. These include the Greek Catholic, Syrian Catholic, Chaldaean Catholic, and Armenian Catholic churches. They acknowledge papal authority in dogma yet retain their distinctive liturgies.

UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC.

Political union of Syria and Egypt that formed on 1 February 1958 and lasted until 28 September 1961. It came about largely due to the initiative of members of the Ba'th Party in the Syrian government. Army officers also tended to favor union as a way to secure their dominance in Syrian politics. In the new republic, Egypt and Syria were referred to as the northern and southern regions, respectively, and Cairo became the capital. Egyptian President Gamal Abd al-Nasir completely dominated the UAR's politics by insisting on the dissolution of all Syrian political parties, including the Ba'th, as a condition for forming the union. He also sent Egyptian security services to stamp out any dissent.

The first UAR government counted three Syrians in the cabinet, including Ba'th Party leaders Salah al-Din al-Bitar and Akram al-Hawrani. In addition, the Ba'th was given three ministries in the provincial Syrian cabinet. Nonetheless, Nasir allotted little authority to the ministries and the Ba'thists became disenchanted with union. In December 1959, Ba'th Party leaders resigned from the UAR government that they had brought about. A few months later, three more Syrians resigned their central government posts as well. Nasir purged the Syrian officer corps of any individuals whose loyalty could be questioned and reduced by half the number of Syrian officers; at the same time, he sent more than two thousand Egyptian officers to Syria. In addition to Egypt's political domination of the UAR, it also dominated the union's economy through preferential treatment for Egyptian industries and banks and restrictions on Syrian foreign trade.

By the beginning of 1961, most Syrians' initial enthusiasm for the union had dissipated and their disenchantment deepened with the announcement in July 1961 of Socialist Decrees nationalizing broad sectors of the economy. Perhaps the final straw for Syrians came in August

1961 when Nasir proposed the decentralization of administration for the UAR. This would have divided Syria into several provinces, each governed by an individual appointed by Nasir. Damascus would no longer serve as an effective capital even of the UAR's northern region. On 28 September 1961, disaffected Syrian officers and politicians seized power and dissolved the union.

After the March 8, 1963 coup brought to power a prounion regime, Egyptian and Syrian leaders held talks for reviving an enlarged UAR that would add Iraq, where a Ba'thist regime had come to power in February, to the union. The talks lasted for one month, but mutual mistrust clouded the chances for agreement on a formula that would achieve unity, yet respect the distinct conditions in each country.

UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTION 242.

At the conclusion of the June 1967 war, the United Nations Security Council passed this resolution calling for the withdrawal of Israel's forces from territories it occupied during the war: the Golan Heights, the Sinai Peninsula, Gaza, and the West Bank. The resolution also called for an end to the state of war and for the establishment of peace in the region. Syria's neo-Ba'th regime rejected the resolution, but after the October 1973 war the regime of Hafiz al-Asad accepted it. Ever since then, Syria has regarded UN Resolution 242 as the basis for peace with Israel because the Syrians believe that its implementation will bring about the recovery of the Golan Heights.

UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTION 338.

At the end of the October 1973 war, the United Nations Security Council passed this resolution calling for implementation of Resolution 242, including the withdrawal of Israel's forces from the occupied territories. Syria accepted the resolution in the hope that a diplomatic approach would bring about an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

UNITED STATES.

In the first years of Syria's independence, the chief concern of the United States was to bring Syria into the region's pro-western camp. Syria's primary foreign policy

concerns, however, were regional, particularly the conflict with Israel and relations with other Arab nations. The US supported the military coup of Husni al-Za'im in March 1949 in the hope that he would reach an agreement with Israel. The US also had good relations with Adib al-Shishakli and tried to persuade him to enter into an anticommunist military alliance in 1951, but he had to contend with the popular neutralist campaign of the Ba'th Party, the Arab Socialist Party, and the Islamic Socialist Front. Following Shishakli's overthrow in 1954, Syria continued to elude American and British attempts to bring her into pro-western alliances, such as the Baghdad Pact. As the leftist trend in Syrian politics gained strength, the Eisenhower administration became alarmed and decided to try to overthrow the government. On 12 August 1957, the Syrian government expelled three American diplomats for plotting a coup d'etat. The Americans had contacted several army officers, but the plot was quickly detected and aborted. The US then orchestrated a public campaign criticizing Syria for falling into the orbit of the Soviet Union. It dispatched a State Department official to confer with leaders of Turkey, Iraq, Lebanon, and Jordan about the "Syria problem." By October the crisis in American-Syrian relations was smoothed over by the diplomatic efforts of Saudi Arabia, but the threat it posed accelerated Syria's rush into union with Egypt's Gamal Abd al-Nasir and the formation of the United Arab Republic.

There followed a long period of poor relations that reached their nadir when Syria severed diplomatic relations after the June 1967 war. Six years later, after the October 1973 war, the Syrians accepted American mediation for a disengagement of forces on the Golan Heights, and the two countries restored diplomatic relations in June 1974. But the following year, the US mediated an Egyptian-Israeli agreement that caused President Hafiz al-Asad to mistrust the US.

Relations continued to deteriorate in the early 1980s, particularly over Israel's invasion of Lebanon and the American attempt to secure diplomatic gains for Israel in the form of a security agreement with Lebanon. The US decided to give full support to Lebanese President Amin Gemayel's bid

to establish his government's authority over the country. Syria responded by rallying Lebanese opposition to Gemayel and his American backers. The US accused the Syrians of plotting the suicide truck bomb that demolished the marine barracks in Beirut in October 1983. American naval and air forces bombarded Lebanese militias allied with Syria, and in December 1983, the Syrians shot down two American warplanes. Two months later, the US withdrew its forces from Lebanon. But relations with Syria remained strained as the US pursued the Reagan Plan for a peace settlement between Jordan and Israel.

The Bush administration (1989-1993) moved to improve relations with Syria by cooperating in Lebanon, and Syria was seeking to repair relations with the US at a time when Soviet power in the region was obviously on the wane. Then, Iraq's invasion of Kuwait created an opening for a greater degree of cooperation with the US. Asad seized the opportunity by agreeing to send Syrian forces to participate in Operation Desert Shield to protect Saudi Arabia from a possible Iraqi attack. In return, the US agreed to a Syrian attack on its nemesis in Lebanon, General Michel Aoun. Throughout the crisis leading up to the 1991 war between Iraq and the American-led coalition, Syria provided valuable political support for the US and its Arab allies. After the conclusion of the war, the US pushed harder for a comprehensive settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict that addressed Syria's desire to recover the Golan Heights. The Syrians agreed to attend the Madrid Conference in December 1991 largely because of a desire to maintain better relations with the US. Although the American government continues to accuse Syria of sponsoring terrorism and violating human rights, the two governments have placed greater importance on coordinating efforts to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict.

W

WAHHABI MOVEMENT.

A religio-political movement that arose in central Arabia during the second half of the eighteenth century under the religious inspiration of Muhammad ibn Abd al-

Wahhab and the political leadership of Muhammad ibn Sa'ud. The movement insisted that Muslims adhere to its leader's rigorous interpretation of Islamic belief and practice and regarded Ottoman rule as illegitimate because it countenanced religious practices the Wahhabis deemed heretical.

The Wahhabis impinged on Syrian history in the 1790s by raiding villages south of Damascus. Then in 1803 they seized Mecca and forced the return of the pilgrim caravan from Damascus. This amounted to a direct challenge to Ottoman authority because the governors of Damascus were responsible for the safe conduct of the pilgrimage. Between 1803 and 1813, the Wahhabis restricted access to Mecca and occasionally blocked Syrian trade. In 1807, the governor of Damascus, Abd Allah Pasha al-Azm, attempted to conduct the annual pilgrimage by forcing his way to Mecca, but the Wahhabis turned him back before he reached Medina. The pilgrimage of the following year was also turned back, and to add insult to injury, bedouin plundered the retreating caravan. Three years later the Wahhabis raided villages in the Hawran. Then, in 1811 the Ottomans persuaded the powerful governor of Egypt, Muhammad Ali, to invade Arabia and evict the Wahhabis from the holy cities.

In addition to military pressure on Syria, the Wahhabis tried to attract Muslims to their reformist teachings by corresponding with the Ottoman governor and the ulama of Damascus, urging them to suppress prostitution, card playing, tobacco, storytelling in coffeehouses, and music. The ulama admitted the presence of sinners, but asserted that their religious practice was perfectly proper and that it was the Wahhabis who needed instruction in religion and that they must cease all violence against fellow Muslims. Nonetheless, Wahhabi propaganda did have effects in Damascus, as when the Ottoman governor decreed that Christians had to wear black garments and Jews had to don red clothes. In the end, Wahhabi propaganda made no real inroads in Syria. The movement did revive in Arabia, though, and at the beginning of the twentieth century, Wahhabi fervor played a central part in the foundation of the modern nation of Saudi Arabia. The teachings of Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahhab are the

foundation for that country's interpretation and application of shari'a, Islamic law.

WANNUS, SA'DALLAH (1941-).

Syria's leading contemporary playwright and a prominent theorist of Arab drama.

Wannus first made his mark with a play entitled *Evening Party for the 5th of June*, a furious condemnation of the Arab political and social order that he and other Arabs held responsible for their stunning defeat in the June 1967 war. The play was first performed in Damascus in 1971, shortly after Hafiz al-Asad seized power from the neo-Ba'th regime that had led Syria to defeat in 1967. In this and later plays, Wannus strives to instill a critically engaged political consciousness in his audiences by placing actors among the audience and by using Syrian dialect, improvisational dialogue, and other techniques borrowed from avant-garde western theater. Wannus is a leading figure in the Syrian theatrical scene, which is one of the liveliest in the Arab world.

WORLD WAR I.

On 14 November 1914 the Ottoman Empire entered the war on the side of Germany against Great Britain, France, and Russia. Syria suffered tremendous hardship during the war because the Ottomans stripped the provinces of food and labor to support the military effort. Furthermore, the Ottomans subjected Syria to a strict political regime under Jamal Pasha, who ordered the executions of several Arab nationalists. Nonetheless, public sentiment generally favored the Ottomans and no general uprising for independence took place in Syria.

During the war, Ottoman atrocities and deportation orders drove thousands of Armenians from central and eastern Anatolia into northern Syria. From these tragic events stem modern Syria's substantial Armenian population. Toward the end of the war, a British offensive launched from Egypt in December 1917 occupied southern Palestine and Jerusalem. Then in September 1918, Hashemite forces advanced through Transjordan while an allied column marched toward Damascus. On 30 September, the Ottoman army withdrew from Damascus and the same evening saw the arrival of Arab

troops. The following day an Arab government under Amir Faysal was proclaimed, bringing to an end more than four centuries of Ottoman rule. Aleppo fell to Anglo-Arab forces 26 October.

WORLD WAR II.

At the outbreak of the war, Syria had been under the rule of the French Mandate for nearly two decades during which the movement for independence had gained widespread support. Nonetheless, the various nationalist parties and organizations all declared their support for France in its wartime efforts. When France fell to German forces in June 1940, the Vichy regime appointed General Henri Dentz high commissioner for Syria. But in June to July 1941 Great Britain and Free French forces under Charles de Gaulle launched an invasion of Syria and Lebanon from Palestine that removed the Vichy regime and placed Syria under a Free French administration. At the start of the invasion, the commanding French officer issued a proclamation pledging France's commitment to granting Syria its independence. The preponderance of British forces in Syria meant that Britain could push the French to make good on their promise, but De Gaulle intended to postpone a final withdrawal, and he suspected that Britain's interest in Syrian independence masked a desire to exploit France's weakness in order to achieve hegemony in the Levant. Nonetheless, Syrian independence was no longer in question; rather, it was a matter of timing.

Pressures from Britain and Syrian nationalists induced the French to announce national elections for July 1943. Shukri al-Quwwatli headed the National Party list, which triumphed at the polls, and Quwwatli became the president. There followed a prolonged stalemate between the Syrian and French governments over the terms by which France would leave the country. The French insisted on a treaty before evacuating, while the Syrians argued that a treaty should be negotiated afterward. The main sticking point was control over the Troupes Spéciales. In May 1945, anti-French demonstrations erupted throughout Syria. France responded by launching air attacks and shelling on Damascus on 29 and 30 May, killing 400 Syrians. Britain intervened by having its troops take

control, and international opinion condemned France. In July the French agreed to cede control over the Troupes Spéciales to the Syrian authorities. On 17 April 1946, nearly a year after the end of the war in Europe, French troops withdrew from independent Syria.

Y

YARMUK, BATTLE OF.

In 636 the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius responded to the first wave of Arab invasions into southern and central Syria by sending a huge army to regain the lost territories. The Arabs evacuated Homs and Damascus, which they had only recently occupied, and withdrew southward. Byzantine and Muslim forces gathered near the Yarmuk River in the summer of 636. That August they fought the largest battle in the Arab conquest of Syria. The Arabs routed the Byzantines, thus paving the way for the consolidation of Arab control over Syria without any further serious military resistance.

YAZIDI.

About 12,000 of these non-Muslim Kurds live in Jabal Sim'an west of Aleppo, in Jabal Akrad north of Aleppo, and in Jazira. The Yazidis, who account for less than 5 percent of all Kurds, came from Iraq in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. There used to be a larger Yazidi community in Syria, but their numbers dwindled under the impact of Ottoman persecution. Their religion is a vestige of the ancient Kurdish religion, Yazdani, or the cult of the angels. They believe in a Universal Spirit that created all spiritual existence, including seven angels. One of those angels, the Peacock Angel, is venerated for having created the material world. The Yazidis also believe in avatars of the Universal Spirit, and they celebrate Shaykh Adi as such an avatar.

Z

ZA'IM, HUSNI AL- (1894-1949).

Born in Aleppo, he served in the Ottoman army during World War I. In the French Mandate era, Za'im was an officer in the Troupes Spéciales.

As chief of staff, Colonel Za'im led Syria's first military coup on 30 March 1949. The coup sprang from widespread discontent in the army with the government, particularly regarding criticism of the army's performance in the Palestine War of 1948. Za'im arrested President Shukri al-Quwwatli and Prime Minister Khalid al-Azm in a bloodless coup. In the next few days, Za'im tried to convince a number of prominent politicians to form a provisional cabinet, but they turned him down. So on 3 April he disbanded parliament and promised elections under a new constitution. He also pledged to enfranchise women and distribute state lands to peasants. While Za'im promised to restore democracy, he banned political parties, barred civil servants from political activities, and suppressed dozens of newspapers. One of the more ominous steps Za'im took was to end the interior ministry's control over the gendarmerie and place it under the defense ministry, thereby giving the military a formal role in domestic affairs. Unable to obtain cooperation from political leaders, Za'im formed a cabinet in which he held the offices of prime minister, minister of interior, and minister of defense.

In foreign relations Za'im first pursued closer economic and military relations with Iraq, but Saudi Arabia and Egypt persuaded him to reject unity with the Hashemites. A more pressing problem brewed along the 1948 cease-fire lines. Za'im sent a team of army officers to conduct armistice negotiations (12 April to 20 July) with Israel. At one point, he offered to absorb 300,000 Palestinian refugees and to reach a peace treaty from Israel in return for border adjustments in Syria's favor. Israel rejected his offer because of its desire to control the water resources along the frontier with Syria.

By August, the roster of Za'im's opponents included partisans of the Syrian Social National Party upset at Za'im's betrayal of their leader Antun al-Sa'ada, Druze officers who distrusted the colonel's deployment of troops in Jabal Druze, and the Iraqi government. More generally, his growing arrogance and pomposity deeply offended public opinion. On 14 August 1949 Colonel Sami al-Hinnawi led a military coup to depose Za'im. A Druze lieutenant and partisan of the

SSNP arrested Za'im at his residence and carried out the order to execute him and his civilian associate Muhsin al-Barazi.

ZANGI, IMAD AL-DIN (1087-1146).

Atabeg for the Saljuk prince of Mosul, Zangi ruled Aleppo from 1128 until 1146. After taking over Aleppo, he resolved to extend his rule to the rest of Muslim Syria, leaving the coast under Crusader rule. This ambition involved him in several campaigns that eventually brought Hama and Homs under his rule, but the atabegs of Damascus defied him. In Muslim annals, Zangi is best known for his 1144 conquest of the County of Edessa, the first Frankish state to fall to Muslim reconquest.

ZU'AYYIN, YUSUF AL- (1931-).

Medical doctor and member of the neo-Ba'th regime of 1966 to 1970. Salah al-Jadid had Zu'ayyin, a Sunni from the Euphrates River town of Albukamal, appointed prime minister in the first Ba'thist regime in August 1965. He retained the post in the neo-Ba'th regime from 1966 until Hafiz al-Asad forced his resignation in October 1968. After Asad came to power in November 1970, he had Zu'ayyin imprisoned until 1981 when he was allowed to leave the country and settle in Hungary.

ZU'BI, MAHMUD AL-.

Prime minister of Syria since October 1987. Zu'bi had been speaker of the People's Assembly and was a veteran member of the Ba'th Party. He assumed office at a time of deep economic problems marked by inflation, electricity cuts, shortages in essential commodities, and a foreign exchange crisis. His government proceeded with cautious implementation of a policy of "relaxation," a term intended to distinguish Syria's economic liberalization from the more thorough campaign undertaken in Egypt and other Arab countries in the 1970s. Syria's economic crisis gradually subsided and Zu'bi has remained in office longer than any prime minister under the regime of Hafiz al-Asad.

Bibliography

Introduction

Before World War II, twentieth-century scholarship on Syria was predominantly the work of French orientalist, so works by the most prominent early French authors have been included. In the postwar era, a new generation of French scholars has continued the distinguished tradition of their predecessors, while American and British scholars have produced a vast corpus on Syria. Consequently, this bibliography includes more English-language works and, for reasons of space, adopts a more selective approach to recent French-language publications. Naturally, there is a vast amount of Arabic-language literature on all aspects of Syria, but because this is a general reference for western readers, Arabic works are not included. There is also an enormous amount of literature on archaeology in Syria and nearby lands, but in view of this work's more recent focus, I have selected just a few general works on the country's prehistoric and ancient heritage.

The only comprehensive historical survey of Syria from ancient times to the twentieth century is Philip Hitti's classic, though somewhat dated, *History of Syria*. Detailed treatment of individual topics is found in various articles in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, second edition. More recent surveys of modern history (since 1800) include A. L. Tibawi's *A Modern History of Syria* and Tabitha Petran's *Syria*. Kemal Salibi's *Syria under Islam* covers the first Islamic centuries; the Crusades are comprehensively treated in Kenneth Setton's five-volume *History of the Crusades*; for the Mamluk era, one should consult *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages* by Ira Lapidus. Much recent historical scholarship has focused on the Ottoman era, but there is no single work that covers the entire four centuries. Notable monographs on the early Ottoman period are Adnan Bakhit's *The Ottoman Province of Damascus in the Sixteenth Century*, Karl Barbir's *Ottoman Rule in Damascus, 1708-1758*, Abraham Marcus's *The Middle East on the Eve*

of Modernity: *Aleppo in the Eighteenth Century*, and Bruce Masters's *The Origins of Western Economic Dominance in the Middle East: Mercantilism and the Islamic Economy in Aleppo, 1600-1750*. For the nineteenth century one should consult *An Occasion for War: Civil Conflict in Lebanon and Damascus in 1860* by Leila Fawaz and *Families in Politics: Damascene Factions and Estates of the 18th and 19th Centuries* by Linda Schatkowski Schilcher. For social and economic history in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the works of Abdul Karim Rafeq are essential reading. The rise of Arab nationalism in the late Ottoman period is the subject of Ernest Dawn's classic *From Ottomanism to Arabism: Essays on the Origins of Arab Nationalism*, Philip Khoury's *Urban Notables and Arab Nationalism: The Politics of Damascus, 1860-1920*, and a fine collection of essays, *The Origins of Arab Nationalism*, edited by Rashid Khalidi.

Syria's first bid for independence is the subject of Malcolm Russell's careful study *The First Modern Arab State: Syria under Faysal, 1918-1920*. For the Mandate era Philip Khoury's *Syria and the French Mandate: The Politics of Arab Nationalism, 1920-1945* is the outstanding work. Two classic studies remain the best sources on the first decade of independence: Patrick Seale's *The Struggle for Syria: A Study of Postwar Arab Politics, 1945-1958* examines Syrian developments in a regional context, while Gordon Torrey's *Syrian Politics and the Military, 1945-1958* treats domestic developments in greater detail. The definitive study of the Ba'th party's early development is John Devlin's *The Ba'th Party: A History from its Origins to 1966*; a more specific work on the first Ba'thist regime is *Syria under the Baath, 1963-1966: The Army-Party Symbiosis* by Itamar Rabinovich. For the unity experiment with Egypt and the Syrian Ba'th's relations with Egypt, Malcolm Kerr's *The Arab Cold War, 1958-1970* is a model of elegant conciseness. More recent political developments receive thorough treatment from a political scientist's perspective in Raymond Hinnebusch's *Authoritarian Power and State Formation in Ba'thist Syria: Army, Party, and Peasant*. A different approach is afforded in Patrick Seale's *Asad of Syria: The Struggle for the Middle East*. There is no single work that surveys the conflict with Israel; instead the reader must consult general works on the ArabIsraeli wars. Mention should be made, however, of Aryeh Shalev's *The Israel-Syria Armistice Regime, 1949-1955*. A review of Syria's terms for a settlement with Israel is in Alasdair Drysdale and Raymond

Hinnebusch's *Syria and the Middle East Peace Process*. Syrian foreign policy is considered in Seale's two monographs and Kerr's study as well in the following works: Adeed Dawisha, *Syria and the Lebanese Crisis*; Yair Evron, *War and Intervention in Lebanon: The Israeli-Syrian Deterrence Dialogue*; Eberhard Kienle, *Ba'th v. Ba'th: The Conflict between Syria and Iraq*; Pedro Ramet, *The Syrian-Soviet Relationship since 1955: A Troubled Alliance*.

To stay abreast of current scholarship, the quarterly bibliography *Index Islamicus* is indispensable. For those seeking a synopsis of recent developments, there is an annual review in each year's *The Middle East and North Africa*, published by Europa Publications Limited; and the *Middle East Journal* contains a quarterly chronology in each issue.

The Bibliography is divided into the following sections:

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